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DON RAPHAEL,

A ROMANCE.

BY GEORGE WALKER,

AUTHOR OF THE THREE SPANIARDS, VAGABOND,

POEMS, &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Now on my soul, 'tis what an outrag'd heart,
Like your's, should wish!—I should, by heav'n, esteem it
Most exquisite revenge!

Tancred and Sigismunda.

London:

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DON RAPHAEL.

CHAPTER I.

The Heavens are just and hate impiety,
And will (no doubt) reveal such heinous crimes :
Censure not any, till you know the right :
Let him be judge, that bringeth truth to light.

Old Plays.

THE sight of a man in the chamber of her father, at that unusual hour, and standing almost over him, with the lamp in one hand and a dagger grasped in the other, struck her at once with the most horrible apprehensions ; and uttering a cry of fear, she attempted to throw herself between me and the bed, when her foot slipping, she would have dashed her head against the frame of the bed, had not I suddenly

VOL. II, B leaped

leaped to save her, in doing which, I trod upon the lamp that had fallen from her hand. I caught her with one arm, and stretching out the other with an involuntary impulse to save myself, I struck the unfortunate Don Raphael with his own dagger.

My soul was agonized with horror at this terrible accident. I should instantly have plunged the fatal weapon into my own breast, had not the cries of Cornelia, and the groans of her father, called me from the miserable and selfish suggestions of despair.

I threw the dagger from me with a violence which made it penetrate the opposite wall, and raising Cornelia, I flew to assist Don Raphael. He was wounded in the breast, and the blood flowed profusely. No words of explanation could be spared. I lifted the lamp, which was near expiring upon the floor, and gave it to Cornelia, who, pale as the corpse of a departed nun, stood in almost lifeless horror, while I endeavoured

deavoured to bandage the wound, which from the nature of my fall, was in a sloping direction, and though considerable, did not appear to me to be deep.

“Oh God!” exclaimed I, when I had made an end of this terrible office, “who would have thought of this!” I turned my eyes upon Cornelia, who stood with very little appearance of life. I looked upon the pale countenance of Don Raphael, who appeared fast approaching dissolution, and madness seemed gathering upon me. I felt as if I had been at once the murderer of both father and daughter.

“It was well---it was well,” repeated I, without knowing what I uttered. “It was not without reason Don Raphael denied my entrance into his society. His foreboding spirit, penetrating futurity, read in me the cause of his death. O Cornelia, beloved object of my soul’s best choice, am I to approach your heart through the bosom of your father? Kill me not with looks like these. I am already distracted. Would

that I could for ever fly from this scene ; but while memory remains, it will crowd upon me."

I grasped her hands between mine, gazing wildly in her frightened countenance, where mingled apprehensions portrayed a meaning she had no language to utter.

"How dreadful is this," cried I, glancing alternately from the daughter to the father, who lay without power of speech. "Shall I not lose you for ever. I cannot, cannot think of parting in this situation, and yet insurmountable necessity requires me hence. Cornelia, you know how I love you. But a moment, and we shall never meet again. But is not this moment left me to lead you hence. Fly with me, let us seek some far distant abode."

As I pronounced these incoherent expressions, I attempted to draw her from the bed-side, but this action recalled the sense of her situation to her bewildered mind, and she struggled with indignation to escape.

"My

“ My father was right,” cried she bursting into tears. “ O what a creature is man ! Insidious and humble in his approaches ; but terrible when he has the power : Leave me, Lorenzo ; leave me to die here with my father.”

“ You destroy me ;” cried I. “ You rend my soul with agony !---Leave you here to die with your father ; whom I have---Great heaven ! this is too much. You must abhor me, Cornelia : I will remain and die with you, for I have no longer desire to live.”

She gazed upon me with a look of the most tender expression. “ Ah, Lorenzo,” said she, speaking through her tears, “ how greatly wretched has this strange business made us. By what way could you enter this chamber, and on what occasion could you come ?”

“ Your words,” replied I, prejudice me, and touch me with grief : this is not a moment for explanation. Your father is too probably on the verge of life, His

wounds, which I have bound up, have reduced him to the last stage of weakness. We are here far from human aid, and before I could fend from Leon, Don Raphael will no longer require relief: what then will become of you? Shall you be left exposed to all the horrors of such a situation, and the danger of this forest, where malignant and mischievous spirits are abroad."

"I have no dread of these," replied she; "my father has taught me otherwise."

"I mean not of immaterial beings; I speak of men."

"Too true!--Too true!" cried she, with a look of dejection. "Man is the being I feel I ought to have dreaded most, and whom I will in future avoid. I conjure you to depart. I must fetch an elixir I have too long delayed, and which my terror caused me to forget. My father charged me to remember its use, and this is the miserable moment to try its power."

I took

I took a long look at Don Raphael, whose eyes were closed, and who breathed so weakly, that I had no doubt in my own mind of his rapid dissolution. I accompanied Cornelia to the library, where she selected the elixir she had mentioned, of whose efficacy I had little faith.

The moment drew near that was to determine my fate; when I must either leave Cornelia and her father in their uncertain and exposed situation, or for ever abandon all my projects in life, and what was to me a thousand times more insufferable, be branded with infamy, and if taken, condemned for desertion.

The passions of honour and of love, were in counter array within my bosom, and each in turn arose so violent, that opposition appeared vain. I wished to detain Cornelia that I might say every thing which crowded for utterance, but the situation of her father would not permit delay. I trembled at the thought that he might even then be expiring, under the agonizing reflection

reflection, that his daughter had deserted his dying bed. The clock at this moment struck four; I started at the summons for my departure. I reflected, that to stay would render my own wishes abortive; my fate seemed determined, and pressing the hand of the trembling maid to my lips, and my bosom, "Go," cried I, as a ministering angel, "go---may you carry peace and blessing to the couch of your father. Whatever shall be my future fortune, dear Cornelia, forget me not."

She moved away too much agitated to reply; and fearing to trust the imbecility of my resolution, I immediately left the library, and following the passages I had before traversed, with some difficulty I gained the open and ruined part of the building, taking care to close every door behind me.

It was yet dark when I entered upon the forest; the breath of morning was beginning to move, and the mists which hung amongst the boughs, to disperse before the coming day.

I stole

I stole with cautious, yet rapid steps, along the winding paths, wet with dew ; the charms of nature had no power to touch my imagination ; my thoughts were all inverted upon myself, and the objects I had left behind ; and the soft breathing of the air drew from me many a sigh.

I moved on as by instinct, to the spot where I had attached my mule ; and had it been day, I should doubtless have lingered in the grove, where every object would have reminded me of Cornelia ; but a deep gloom now rested upon the thicket, and a dark vapour curled upon the surface of the stream.

I quitted the spot with the same melancholy as a man going on a long exile, would quit his native shore, absorbed in my reflections, and unmindful of the way. The day broke, the blue clouds of night passed away beyond the mountains, and the sun arose, diffusing gladness over many lands ; but its beams could not penetrate the night within my soul, nor diffuse one

gleaming reflection through the clouds of misfortune which hung around me.

I knew not how long I rode, thus enwrappt in melancholy thoughts, when I was suddenly roused by the distant rumbling of a drum. I paused ; a strain of martial music stole through the air ; and as the sound came nearer and grew louder, it vibrated over my nerves with an effect, such as I had never before experienced.

It was a sensation of excessive, yet melancholy pleasure ; it was a language which penetrated my whole existence with something superior to articulate expression. I paused, I sighed, I wept, and was lost in a transport of mingled misery and delight.

When I awoke from the delirium of high stretched feeling, the rougher notes and loftier strains drew near ; the rolling drum thundered distinctly, and my nerves recovered their tone.

An innate sensation of shame tinged my cheeks, and my heart began to beat with firmer pulsations. I recalled my
scattered

scattered ideas, and hastened to join the legions that were advancing along the road.

I knew not what excuse I could make to the Duke, and when he came near me, (for I had to pass to the rear) I turned my eyes to the ground, my confusion depriving me of words ; he smiled at my embarrassment, and pointing to my situation, “ You will learn better” said he, “ in a little time.” I hastened to assume my station, determining in my own mind, that future vigilance should repair my present neglect.

Our march was through a country, very partially enlivened with agriculture : the brown sterility of the pastures suited the disposition of my mind, and was indeed but too proper a prelude to those scenes of devastation and distress we were quickly to witness.”

It was many days before we reached Balbastro, on the river Linea, which takes its rise in the Pyrenees and runs into the Ebro.

Ebro. It was from this town that we took the field and entered upon active service.

It is natural to suppose, that however exterior objects might engage me, or the necessary duties of my station require my attention, that all my leisure moments and midnight thoughts were directed to Cornelia and Don Raphael; and when I reflected on the desperate situation I left them in, and the utter impossibility of procuring any information, despondency preyed upon my spirits, and I had no enjoyment of my existence.

The nature of my employment was ill calculated to give peace to the mind; the whole province of Catalonia was in arms. Shall I, my dear Count, draw a veil over their sufferings? are you already acquainted with the miseries of a wretched people, oppressed by a licentious military, and to say the least, an imbecile Governor? Shall I paint to you the famine which the free foraging of the soldiery had created; the distress, the distraction, and destruction
which

which every where met the eye ? Young women and children perishing for want, the subjects of outrage to their unfeeling oppressors ! But no---I see your blood rises at these things, and I will bury them in silence.

The outrages of warfare, and particularly of civil discord, are too terrible for cool narration ; they cannot be heard without horror---they are the ultimatum of human passion bearing boundless sway, and rioting in all the demoniacal phrenzy which the dark principle of evil can suggest or pursue. Reason, justice, and religion are trod down, and man becomes to his fellow a more dreadful curse, than all the diseases floating on the earth's surface. Great God, what are the scenes I have witnessed, and which thou also hast beheld ! but thy forbearance prevented thy stretching forth thine arm, and sweeping from existence the whole species of mankind.

During the winter, I was more than once engaged in light skirmishes with
 knots

knots of the disaffected, in all of which they were defeated, after the most obstinate resistance ; and notwithstanding the fresh hopes the sudden revolt of Portugal, and the secret assistance of France inspired in them, it was easy to perceive they would find it impossible to make head against the torrent of forces Philip poured upon them, from every quarter of the kingdom.

The unexpected revolution, effected in the name of the Duke of Breganza, however it roused the dormant energy of our Sovereign, it did not appear in his eyes, of equal moment with the subjugation of Catalonia ; and every effort was made to open the campaign in the spring, with so much decision, as should crush at once the intrigues of France, (ever busy in promoting mischief,) and shortening the sufferings of a people, who, whatever they might have endured beneath the pressure of an ill chosen Governor, had now plunged themselves into tenfold misery.

My

My own private misfortunes led me more particularly to feel those of others; and it was now in actual service, that the pageantry and glitter of military parade faded in my esteem. I sighed for the juvenile retreats of my early years; the shaded alleys, and the solemn cloisters, where the clang of arms never sounded, and the cry of murder never pierced the ear.

I wondered at that infatuation, which before my entrance on active service had induced me to pant for an opportunity of acquiring fame, and distinguishing myself on the list of heroes. In a word, I became entirely disgusted with my situation, for nature had not formed me to delight in war.

It was now near a twelvemonth that I had not received any supply from those who had regarded my early youth, and selected this station for my adoption. I had never received from them any one token of recognizance or esteem, and I conceived myself wholly emancipated from obligation, and without any controul upon my actions.

It

It was true I had no other dependence than my situation, yet my disgust every day increased, and when my thoughts turned upon the castle of St. Helma, I was more than once on the point of sacrificing every future prospect, that I might restore and satisfy the fears which for ever haunted me, and destroyed my repose.

It was impossible to fly from my station, from any motives of private feeling; I had put my hand to the plough, and there was no turning back. Count Pandolfo was also unremitting in his attention to my actions, and he seemed to overlook them with a species of jealousy, which desired to discover an error; at times he would treat me with the greatest familiarity and confidence, and then he would sink into coldness and neglect, nearly bordering upon contempt.

This treatment was far from gaining either my respect or esteem, though self-love induced me to emulate appearing in his eyes superior to others in my situation. I endeavoured to trace this behaviour to
its

its source. I knew not by what invisible connection he was affianced to me, though I certainly suspected from various incidents, that if any man knew the secret of my birth, it was he. I considered that Ippolita might have influenced him against me, and stimulated him to avenge the flights I had thrown upon her; but I knew not that she had quitted Leon, having never seen her since the morning of my departure to Dajos. Be the cause what it might, it was sufficient to render my situation painfully irksome, had my mind been free from other cares, or at leisure to humour all the caprices of this ever variable man.

The benumbing powers of winter softened into the balmy breathings of spring, and nature waking from the arms of sterility seemed to call on man to enjoy the beauties she expanded to his view; but with what different sentiments were the passions of the people inspired.

Every preparation for warfare was made, and it seemed as if rest had given new appetite

petite to vengeance. An accident prevented my partaking in the glories of the campaign, and completely filled up the measure of my disgust against the employment to which I was confined.

The Count appointed me a detachment, with which I was to penetrate the country, and collect a dépôt of forage at a small village near Urzel.

For two days the country round was laid under requisition, and every article which could be converted into human sustenance was carried off or destroyed; it being the command of our generals, that a partial famine should be created to subdue those, whom the force of arms could not reach. I had no power to disobey those orders, and I lamented that the ferocity of the common foldiers even outran the commands of their officers; they seemed to take peculiar delight in acts of outrage and cruelty.

The thinness of the inhabitants at this poor part of the province, did not render the service very dangerous, having only to
guard

guard against any secret snare, which the revenge of the people might with too much justice prompt.

It was evening when I was returning from seizing a small and secret store of corn, with five soldiers and a waggon, when a loud cry from some little distance attracted my attention. I immediately turned my horse, and pursued the path which led to a small stream, bordered by a thicket, from whence the cries continued with increased violence.

I rushed forward, and the sound of my approach giving the alarm, I was too late to prevent the escape of a wretch, who had committed one of the most shocking acts of barbarity I had witnessed.

The first object I perceived was a little boy lying upon the ground, drenched in blood, and seemingly dead; near him was a young girl about fourteen, bleeding violently from a cut across the forehead.

I dismounted at such a horrid sight, and hastening to the girl, desired her to tell me

me instantly what was become of the monster who had been guilty of so infamous an act of wanton cruelty. She pointed to a narrow path, winding along the banks of the stream, and so much was my vengeance roused, that not waiting to attend the poor creature, who might have died from this neglect, I was mounting to fly after the villain, when the clattering of horses behind, and the voices of men, alarmed me for my own safety, fearing I had fallen into an ambuscade. Fortunately it was three of my own men, who had left the waggon to the care of their comrades, and come forward to partake in my danger.

“Pursue that path,” cried I, pointing the way. “Seize whoever you meet, and detain them. They galloped off at the word, and once more dismounting, I endeavoured to relieve the wounded girl, inquiring of her the nature of the outrage she had suffered.

She informed me, that her parents lived at about half a league distant; along the
banks

banks of the rivulet. That they had been stripped of all their provisions by a party of six rebels, who had severely beaten her father because he would not join them. Being left without food, and in these calamitous times not knowing where to procure any, she had left the cottage with her little brother, to see if they could find any thing to eat, their father being ill in bed of his bruises. They had been at a convent at some distance, where they had received some coarse bread, and were returning, when they were met by a man dressed in the rebel uniform, who had led them into the thicket, under pretence of giving them some provisions he had there. But they had no sooner entered than he knocked down the boy with a small sword, which he wore in a belt, and began to strip the girl, with other acts of violence, repeatedly striking her, till she was so overcome, that though she continued to scream, he was on the point of completing his brutality, when he was alarmed at the sound of my approach;

approach; and in the rage of his disappointment, he had cut her over the forehead, being in too much haste to fly to take a certain aim.

Such was the substance of this transaction; which the poor girl related with tears and pauses, and which I filled up with vows, of vengeance on the head of this wretch, if he was taken. The situation of this girl aroused all my compassion. She was so feeble, and unable to stand, that I doubted whether I should be able to convey her alive to her father's cottage. The boy was quite dead with a deep wound on the head; and having placed his sister on my horse, I mounted behind, supporting her in my arms; and it being by this time quite dark, I had some difficulty in tracing the path that led by the river.

My horse, which was somewhat high-blooded, becoming tired of the curb, gave signs of uneasiness, and beginning to curvet, his foot slipped in the narrow path, and he set off at full speed. It was with
difficulty

difficulty I could preserve my charge from falling. We quickly drew near the cottage, at the door of which I could perceive a light, and several people were round it.

I endeavoured to stay my horse, but he was not to be managed with one hand, and I was obliged to pass the cottage. The peasant, who had left his bed, and stood at the door with his wife, and two other women, anxiously looking out for the children, seeing their daughter thus forcibly hurried away, by they knew not whom, set up at once a loud cry, and at the same moment I found myself wounded in the shoulder by a pistol the distracted father had fired.

The smart of the wound gave me strength to rein-in the horse, and turning round in anger, I rushed towards the cottage. The peasant flew to meet me with a large knife in his hand; and notwithstanding his weakness, his despair gave him sufficient strength to wound me severely in
the

the arm, without my having any means of defence, my sword being entangled in the garments of his daughter, who lay without sense upon my left arm.

I knew not that I had ever been in such extreme danger; my words being of no avail to appease the man; whom injury, and the spectacle of his bleeding daughter, stimulated to actual madness.---He foamed at the mouth with rage; and while the women rent the air with cries, he attempted to wound me mortally, which I could only prevent by clasping his daughter more firmly in my arms: as it was, he cut me severely in several places, and throwing himself at me, more like a beast of prey than a man, he would, doubtless, have destroyed me, had not, fortunately for me, and to close this sad adventure, three of my troopers, alarmed by the pistol they had heard, rode full speed to the spot in doubt for my safety. When seeing my situation, by the light from the door, they took no time to wait for orders, but rushing upon the un-
fortunate

fortunate peasant, laid him dead in a moment beneath my horse's feet; and it was with the greatest difficulty I restrained them from putting the women to the sword, and burning the cottage to the ground.

Such are the nature and events of civil war, where it is impossible to distinguish justice, and where often acts of generosity are terminated by the most sinister events. My wounds were extremely painful, bleeding profusely, which so much weakened me that I could scarcely sit my horse. I delivered the girl to her friends; and not staying for explanation or thanks, I demanded if the men had succeeded in discovering the villain. They informed me they had been beating about, and had just got a glimpse of a man skulking amongst the bushes at the edge of the water, when they had been called off by the report of the pistol to attend to my safety.

“Lead on then, my brave fellows,” cried I, “if this man escapes, we have but

half done our duty." We extended our line, riding briskly down to the water's edge. A sudden plunge engaged our attention, and perceiving a man swimming across the stream, I immediately dashed after him, with no little imprudence, but my spirits had been roused, and I considered nothing but to make an example of this wretch. I was up above the saddle in water before I reached the other side, where I found him just landed; and finding it impossible to escape, he begged on his knees for quarter. My men landed at the same time, and securing his hands behind him, they threw him over one of the horses, and we returned to the baggage waggon. Providence had determined to take the punishment of this villain off our hands; the horse of the trooper who carried him taking fright, he was thrown head-foremost over the battlements of a bridge, and dashed in pieces down the rocks.

By the time we reached the village, I was so faint and stiffened, with sitting so long

long, wounded and wet, that I had no power to dismount, and I was obliged to be carried into the inn where I lodged, and put to bed. A surgeon immediately attended me; the wound in my shoulder was considerably irritated and inflamed, and it was considered hazardous to attempt the extraction of the ball, till these unfavourable symptoms should subside.

The agitation I had suffered, and the incidents I had witnessed, pressed upon my spirits; and now that I became confined to bed, where I had leisure to summon every unpleasing incident into view---the subject became too powerful for sufferance, and a fever preyed upon my spirits.

It was not long before I ceased to be conscious of passing transactions, and while war spread devouring flames around me, an eternal and unquenchable fire preyed within me. In this situation, at a miserable inn, I lay, the object of pity, and expecting dissolution. The bustle of war

prevented much delicacy of attention, and I must have sunk beneath the complication of my disorder, had not the vigour of my constitution been assisted by the kindness of those whom I know not.

CHAP. II.

IT was several days that I lay deprived of reason, and when the first faint glimmerings of understanding broke upon this frightful night, I was bewildered by the objects that furrounded me.

I had not the smallest recollection of any thing that met my sight. I taxed my memory, but no trace could lead me to judge of my situation, and I had only a very confused recollection of the adventure which involved me in these circumstances.

No person near me moved, and when I raised my eyes, I was astonished at the elegance of the furniture, and the hangings that adorned the walls.

I lay some time in a sort of pleasing wonder, almost believing that what I beheld was the lively impression of a dream.

It was not long before I again fell asleep, and when I awoke, the evening sun shone through the windows, with a golden ray, tempered by the mildness of the spring. A sweet perfume of flowers entered the lattice; which was open, and I raised myself to enjoy the freshness of the air, as it breathed through festoons of jessamine and scented claretis.

My wonder every moment increased at the objects which met my eyes, but much more when I looked towards the window, and beheld two ladies elegantly robed in black, sitting in the balcony.

One of them had her back towards me, and the other was leaning in a pensive attitude, contemplating the extensive country before her. The profile of her face, as she thus sat, was inimitably beautiful, and touched with so much thoughtfulness and delicacy, that my heart must have
been

been instantly captivated, if it had not been already charmed by the innocent and beautiful Cornelia. The eyes of this lady were half closed, as in deep meditation ; and not a passion that was allied to roughness, had impressed one trait of existence in her pensive countenance. Her hair was modestly concealed beneath an antique, and close-fitting head-dress; and had she been in an appropriate situation, I should have believed her a nun, in the act of devotion at the shrine of some favoured saint.

I gazed upon her with a sensation of respect and admiration. Divinity, thought I, is impressed in thy features ; resignation, piety, and meekness mingle in thy countenance. Cornelia is beautiful, she is the only object I do or can love, but thou art of celestial birth, and I am tempted to adore. I found it impossible to withdraw my eyes from this fascinating object. Surely, thought I, I am yet an inhabitant of the world, for I see and feel as formerly ; but may we not

retain our senses in the world of spirits? Must not the objects of our regard and delight have some affinity to human passions, or is it that the soul takes upon itself new impressions and new desires?

Some motion that I made as these reflections passed in my mind, attracted the attention of the ladies, and starting, they looked round with pleasing surprize at the sudden turn my illness had taken.

The lady, whose features I had not before seen, entered my room by the Venetian lattice, and coming towards me, made many tender inquiries after my health, in a tone of voice, that was even more pleasing than her solicitude.

She was apparently turned of forty, but her features and figure retained much of beauty, and much of elegance; particularly when her eye sparkled with the expression which frequently, though for short intervals, lighted up the melancholy of her countenance, like the breaks of sunshine

shine through the clouds of an autumnal day.

I inquired by what means I had become the subject of her care; and learnt that the royal army had been obliged to retreat, and concentrate its force at a distance from the village where I had remained, and that with so much confusion and speed, that I had been left to the hospitality of the people at the inn; who, though they considered me as an enemy, had been so charmed by my behaviour in the unfortunate adventure which exposed me to their mercy, that they interested themselves in my favour, and circulated the story. It soon reached the lady and her daughter, who, fearing the rebel army might not restrain the impulses of *civil* vengeance, had me conveyed beneath their roof, where I had lain for ten days with very few symptoms of life.

This lady also informed me, with many sighs, that her husband, the Marquis de Mirandula was unfortunately engaged

in the provincial forces, leaving herself and her daughter Christiana, in all the anxious uncertainty such a situation must necessarily inspire.

It might be, that never having received attention and services from female affection, the words of the lady were to me peculiarly pleasing, and acted as a balm in tranquillizing my mind. Her care and her attention were as efficacious as the prescriptions of the physician, and I was never more satisfied, than while I listened to her voice, and received offices from her hands.

Her daughter Christiana every day paid me a visit in the company of her mother, and I must acknowledge, there were moments when I thought Cornelia her unequal; but then I recollected that I had never had an opportunity of observing the mind of the latter, which might be less polished, though not less excellent. The one possessed all the charms of nature, her sentiments flowed from the native innocence of the human mind, unrefined and uncontrouled

uncontrouled by the dictates of prejudice or custom ; the other was improved by all the refinements of education and sentiment, and was preserved in the path of virtue and honor, by the strictest rules of propriety, and the most exalted principles of piety.

I found infinite pleasure in the conversation of Christiana, her remarks being elegant, and her sentiments the most refined. It is certain that had I seen her before my passion for Cornelia had so fully taken possession of my soul ; I should not have beheld her with indifference, as it was I did *not* behold her with indifference ; I felt for her the most sincere esteem, which could only be removed a few degrees from love. I lamented the visible grief which preyed upon both these amiable women, and which I endeavoured to disperse, by being as cheerful in their presence, as my own misfortunes would allow me.

In a short time I was capable of enjoying the open air, every day passing some hours
in

in an elegant garden, attached to the mansion, where I had the pleasure of observing the opening spring; and I felt new life circulate through my veins.

My thoughts were perpetually recurring to the castle of St. Helma: my anxiety after the fate of Cornelia and her father became every day stronger, and possibly affected me more, as I had no particular engagements to divide my attention.

The Ladies frequently attended me, and not seldom attempted to draw from me some explanation of the chagrin which was but too visible on my features: but the uncertainty of my birth, and the poverty of my fortune, were secrets which I did not like to disclose. To their interesting inquiries I returned general answers, sufficient to inform them that I was particularly unfortunate; and more than once I perceived a tear glitter in the eye of the mild and gentle Christiana, which gave me the most exalted opinion of the delicacy of her mind; and was a strong test of the
passion

passion I felt for Cornelia, which stood unshaken against so much merit.

Love is perhaps a disease of the human mind, for under its influence the smallest trifles become objects of importance; and whatever reminds us of the object beloved is contemplated with pleasure. At so great a distance from Cornelia, I was frequently so absurd as to address speeches to her, as I rambled through the gardens of the Marquis; and it was in one of those moods I composed these lines, without reflecting that she would never see them :---

REMEMBER ME.

A BALLAD.

I

Remember me, when, far away,

I journey through the world's wide waste;
Remember me at early day,

Or when the evening shadows haste.

When high the pensive moon appears,

And Night, with all her starry train,

Gives rest to human hopes and fears;

Remember—I alone complain.

Remember

Remember me, whene'er you sigh,
 Be it at midnight's silent hour ;
 Remember me, and think that I
 Return thy sigh, and feel its pow'r.
 Whene'er you think on those away,
 Or when you bend the pious knee,
 Or when your thoughts to pleasure stray,
 O then, dear Maid, remember me ! *

These simple lines I wrote upon a slip of paper, as I sat in a little alcove, and was so much pleased with them, that I forgot the paper and left it behind me on the seat. I returned in a very few minutes, but they were gone ; either blown away by the wind, or as I had afterwards occasion to suspect, taken away by Christiana, whom I saw hastily tripping along a distant walk.

It was long since the ladies had received information from the Marquis de Mirandula ; and so many various reports were
 every

* This Song, set to Music, may be had of G. WALKER, Music Seller, 106, *Great Portland-street*, Price 1s.

every day circulated, that it was impossible to know what to believe. One day we were informed that the royalists had been defeated, and the next day we were under constant alarm, from the report that the provincialists had been routed, and were flying in every direction, plundering and burning in their flight.

This uneasiness of mind retarded my perfect recovery, notwithstanding the attention I received from these ladies, who seemed to regard me with even relative affection, and to look forward to the hour of separation with regret.

Donna Christiana was more reserved on this subject than Lady Sempronia, her mother: and I could not but observe that she ceased attending me in my rambles through the garden, and by degrees I lost her company altogether, unless in presence of the Marquesa, and then there appeared so much restraint in her manners, that I began to suspect that she had taken the lines I had written to Cornelia, as intended for herself,

herself, and that my presence was no longer welcome.

About this time they received dispatches from the Marquis, informing them of several successes they had gained over the royalists, and his hopes of again enjoying tranquillity in the bosom of his family.

A letter of this nature could not be received without satisfaction, and sadness for a few hours gave place to cheerfulness. We walked together on a fine terrace of soft grass, which commanded an extensive range of view, beautiful and verdant, with all the freshness of spring: the mountains were smiling with sunshine, and a thousand flowers spangled the extensive pastures, which the summer heat had not yet embrowned.

Christiana walked on one side, and her mother upon the other, leaning on my arm, frequently pointing out to me some attractive object, and as frequently sighing, while she sometimes gazed earnestly in my face, as if on the point of making some inquiry

inquiry she had yet feared to hazard. After some time, she cast her eyes upon the ring which Don Raphael had given me. "Lorenzo," said she, with some little hesitation, "methinks that I have seen that ring before---is it a family one?"

I felt the blood flow in my face. "I cannot say that it is," answered I, "it was given me by a person, who is to me almost a total stranger." "Then he must certainly have had very powerful reasons," replied she, "for the original owner of that ring held it in high esteem, and when I saw it on your hand, whilst you lay ill, I had no doubt of your belonging to the family. Do you know the name of the person who made you the present?"

"His name," replied I, "is Don Raphael, the most singular of men."---"Don Raphael," repeated she, "I do not know him. You bear some resemblance to the person whom I once knew to be the owner of that ring. He was, indeed,
a man

a man very different from many. But I have heard that he has been long dead."

Her words struck me as something singular. I recollected that Don Raphael had told me, that the world believed him dead; and I was about to make farther inquiries, but some remark of the Marquesa's interrupted my thoughts. Christiana spoke little---but her smiles, and the mild beaming of her eyes, when she turned them upon me, expressed more than I dared to understand; and for the first time gave birth to a suspicion that filled me with inquietude.

Insensibly the thoughts, which mutually engaged us, silenced remark; and Christiana having taken the arm of her mother, we walked without exchanging a word for a considerable time; till the shades of twilight began to creep upon the earth, and the cool air reminded us of the approach of night.

Lady Sempronia smiled at our inattention. "I should think," said she, "that
our

our minds must be nearly allied, or we could not have been equally absent. No doubt, Lorenzo, you were thinking of some distant lady, or you could not have been so inattentive to those present."

I believe my countenance gave credit to the suspicion. Christiana glanced her expressive eyes towards me, and with a faint smile, and in a voice almost indistinct, bade me good night, and immediately retired.

My fears, by this action, received strong confirmation. - I knew too well, from experience, the symptoms of that subtle and terrible power, which one time or other subdues the strongest hearts; and I regretted sincerely, that I had unfortunately given birth to a passion, neither my rank nor my inclination permitted me to return.

I made a confused apology to the Marquesa for quitting her abruptly, and hastened to the chamber allotted me in this hospitable mansion, where I might determine

mine, at leisure, what was most proper to be done.

My health was every day increasing, though a weakness and languor yet hung upon me, and prevented my desire of returning to the exertions of military employ. It was very dangerous to attempt passing the frontiers of the province, overrun with marauding parties, and a prey to perpetual outrages; yet I saw the necessity of quitting a house, the peace of which my presence might interrupt.

I balanced long without decision: my mind wanting sufficient vigour to form any resolution, which arose from that languor of body which ever accompanies convalescence, and frequently unmans the greatest heroes: I sat debating till the night began to advance. I was without light, and as I had retired early, and from the low casement could cast my eyes over the obscure scenery of the gardens and country, my mind was too much engaged in reflection, to taste the beauties
of

of nature, though the fitness of the night might have tempted me to leave the roof where I had been so hospitably treated, without other ceremony than a note of thanks. But why, thought I, should I steal away like a thief---and whither can I go? Would it not be more agreeable to my character, to seek occasion of disclosing to these ladies all that I know of myself?---without friends, without fortune, without fame---they will no longer regard me with esteem---my engagements with Cornelia will not occasion any sigh of jealousy, or any feeling of regret.

In this final resolution of sacrificing my own pride, to the tranquility of this family, I rose to close the casement; when hearing the sounds of distant music, I stepped out into the balcony to listen, the night being calm and serene. This balcony ran along the garden-side of the house, and the doors of several apartments opened on to it. I feared to venture far, lest I should create alarm, or appear to intrude; but
the

the sweet voice of Christiana, which she accompanied with a guitar, fixed my attention. I listened to several pathetic airs that she sung; and several times fancied that it was Cornelia I heard. At length I heard the words of the little ballad I had lost in the alcove, which she sang with so much feeling, that I sighed when she pronounced the last words, "remember me;" and, turning away, I entered my own chamber, where I retired to rest.

Sleep for some hours was a stranger to my eyes, and it was early in the morning when I awoke very little refreshed, and more unwell than I had been for several days. The chirping of the birds amongst the trees and flowers that intertwined near the lattice, reminded me of the fineness of the weather, and a fresh air breathing the sweets of the morning, invited me to try its efficacy in dispelling the vapours that clouded my senses.

I descended with caution to the garden, where I endeavoured to indulge myself in
all

all the luxury of flowering sweetness, inhaling the fragrance of a thousand flowers, that hung embossed with glittering dew. Several times I paused to listen to the strains of the birds which sported along the vallies, and I could have fancied myself in the wild scenery which formed the valley of St. Helma.

As I advanced along the shady grove of orange trees, blooming with flowers, and hanging with fruit, I perceived a folded paper upon the ground, steeped in the dews of the night ; I took it up, and opening it, read these verses, in the writing of Christiana :

1

The breath of rising morn is sweet,
 When spring perfumes the air with flowers,
 And genial gales, from each retreat,
 Embalm the groves and scent the bowers ;
 Awaking nature smiles delight,
 And bids increase the coming year :
 Cloth'd in a dress of verdure bright ;
 She comes, and all things gay appear :

The

2

The groves resound with cheering strains,
Melodious warblings round me move ;

One gen'ral song, the hills, the plains
Return in sounds, attun'd to love.

Love wakes in ev'ry breast, the flame
Which first was of celestial birth,

But caught by nature, quickly came
To soften man, and reign on earth.

3

Love moves in ev'ry air that blows,
Or wantons on the zephyr's wing,

With limpid streams it gently flows,
Or flings fresh flow'rets o'er the spring.

Then come, thou pow'r of soft delight,
With me thou shalt for ever dwell ;

My pains with some return requite,
And charm the youth I love so well.

Several times I perused this paper, which was more than sufficient to confirm my suspicion. "Alas !" said I, as I held the verses in my hand ; "how wayward is this passion. Why did nature leave its conduct to chance, since chance is ever at variance with reason, and since so seldom two persons regard each other with mutual esteem ?

esteem ? How many quarrels, how many heart-burnings, how much misery and despair would be avoided, were love only to be produced by the collision of minds, which to all others should be cold and indifferent ? Now, the slightest trifle, a phantom only existing in fancy, gives birth to this passion, even against the dictates of judgment ; and the wisest of mankind, make the most absurd connections.”

While I stood making these reflections, and turning the paper in my hand, I was suddenly interrupted by a light quick step along the path, and looking round, I perceived Christiana advancing, her eyes fixed upon the paper, which her knowledge of the contents did not permit her to conceal. She blushed repeatedly, as my eyes turned upon her, and holding out her hand in silence, her down-cast looks seemed to request that I would spare her confusion, and return her the verses.

Had I been myself inspired with the most timid and delicate passion, I could not

have experienced more embarrassment; I had no words to express my sentiments, and giving her the paper, I bowed and hastened from her presence.

It was impossible after such an interview, to enter into any particular of my own fortune; it would imply my knowledge of Donna Christiana's sentiments; it would appear like a refusal on my part, and every word I should utter, would seem loaded with a double meaning, or studied neglect.

I was almost afraid of again appearing in her presence, lest on the one hand I might give encouragement to hopes, which had I been wholly unengaged, I should not have dared to imagine; and on the other, lest my evident coldness should be construed into ingratitude.

It was impossible to think of remaining any longer beneath the same roof; and in the present distracted state of the country, I had but one way of probable escape,
(through

(through the mountains) till time should have cleared the frontiers of the province; where I might then consider, whether I should pursue the road to Leon, where my inclinations pointed, or weak as I was, hasten to the army, which was every thing but absolutely routed.

I retired to my chamber, where I employed myself in drawing up the best apology I could form for my flight, without betraying the real cause, and having pretended a slight indisposition to the Marquesa, I was permitted to remain alone, fearing to meet the eyes of Christiana; for though I felt not the smallest degree of passion, there was such a secret attraction in her pious and angelic features, that I could have spent hours in gazing upon them, as upon a being of celestial birth, whose image bore the impression of a deity.

I watched the approach of evening with impatience, yet with sorrow: it seemed as if I were going to plunge myself into distress, and to leave an asylum where, for the

first time in my life, I had received the pleasures of the tenderest friendship.

I looked from my window upon the shadows of the mountains, and the landscape tinged with gold; Donna Christiana and the Marquesa were walking on the terrace beneath the balcony, and for the last time I had the pleasure of observing them unseen, as they slowly, and arm in arm, passed by.

The night came on apace, and the hour of my premeditated departure drew near; the caprice of spring had shadowed over the heavens with clouds; and when I looked out to see if any stars were visible, the chill winds that passed by, made me shrink back and sigh at the necessity there was that I should encounter them.

I waited at the window till ten o'clock, watching the lowering horizon, in hopes that the clouds might pass away, but impenetrable darkness hung upon the earth.

At the moment of execution I felt ashamed of my flight; it would unavoidably
create

create no little alarm, and seemed to cast some degree of meanness upon my character. Why, indeed, was there a necessity that my departure should be secret? Christiana would not compel me to remain, and I might, if it were necessary, only make the Marquesa privy to my intentions.

Thus I stood in the balcony, revolving every circumstance, and little inclined to set out, I knew not whither, till the clock at length struck eleven, and the sounds died away in distance.

Either, thought I, I must go or return. This indecision ill becomes the character of a soldier. These thoughts were interrupted by a low whisper of distant voices, which seemed to come from the retired part of the garden, and leaning upon the fret-work, I expected the ladies would pass beneath me, though I wondered at their late and solemn walk.

They evidently drew near; and as they advanced, I could distinguish several words spoken in anger; and yet both parties, by

the manner of their expression, appeared desirous of not being heard. It was not long before they came immediately beneath me, where they paused.

“I will go no farther,” said one, in a deep rough voice; “you design to betray me to the servants---be assured, the moment you call for help you are a dead man.”

“Consider,” said another person, in an expostulatory voice. “Consider the derangement of my affairs.”

“And consider that mine are absolutely ruined---that I am in danger every moment.”

“What then,” cried the other, “you fly from the hand of justice, and I am flying from the power of military violence. I know not even to-morrow where I shall find shelter; and is this a time---”

“It is,” cried the ruffian. “It is the only time---and by all the holy saints it shall not escape me. I am well informed
that

that you have considerable property about you."---

"And what then?"

"What then!" cried he, raising his voice. "Is that a difficult question to resolve? I am without money, and must have it---I will not stand parlying here, till some waking ear gets information of our business.---Instantly divide with me the property you carry, or I will take your life, and the whole.---A traitor to his king, cannot betray me!"

This was pronounced with a voice that exulted in mischief, and feared not the success; and while I was astonished at the incident, I was no less so at the voice of the robber, which certainly was familiar to my ear; I had no doubt but it was the Marquis de Mirandula himself, who thus stood beneath me, exposed to such imminent danger. But a moment remained for me to act, so as to rescue the Marquis without exposing him to more certain danger,

it being impossible in the dark to distinguish the one from the other.

The ruffian prepared to execute his threats: "Accept or reject," cried he; "the night flies."

"I will compound with you," said the Marquis, "I cannot see my wife and daughter reduced in one hour to absolute poverty. You cannot be immoveable."

"I will not retract a pistole of the half you have about you---but a moment longer, and I will have the whole."

"Come hither; come hither;" cried I, making as much noise as I could in a moment. "Fire; Fire half a dozen of you at once; Jerome---Tomafo---Roberto---leap the balcony, sword in hand; we have not watched for nothing. The Marquis is beset."

While I uttered these words, I made a tremendous noise, throwing down several vases of flowers, which made a terrible clatter, as if these servants had actually leaped down, and followed myself, sword in hand, firing

firing a pistol in the air ; for I dared not venture to fire at the one I imagined to be the robber, lest in the gloom I should wound the Marquis.

This sudden bustle and clamour, which was the more effectual from the darkness and stillness of the night, threw the robber into so much confusion, that he retreated in an instant, giving the Marquis sufficient time to prepare his arms, if he should again dare the attack, which he might be inclined to do, when he perceived all this rout and noise to proceed from only one person.

“ To which of my faithful domestics,” said the Marquis, “ am I indebted for this fortunate assistance ? You may depend I shall gratefully reward your zeal.”

“ Your Excellenza,” answered I, “ is under a slight mistake ; I am not a domestic, I am a stranger---.”

“ A stranger,” cried he, in a tone of suppressed passion ; “ at this hour, in these gardens ; in the balcony of the palace of the

Marquis de Mirandula. But my arm shall revenge my dishonor. O wretched fortune, for what am I reserved ? When will the malignity of my stars cease to persecute me ?”

“ You are too hasty,” replied I, “ if you would but attend three minutes with patience---”

“ Three minutes ; three hours ;” cried he, “ I would attend you for a month, if you could explain away what is too clear ; and make me believe that these are not my gardens ; that this is not my palace ; that my wife and daughter do not inhabit these walls, and that I am not Mirandula, the most miserable of men.”

“ Your wife and your daughter,” cried I, “ are angels of purity.”

“ Would to heaven,” cried he, interrupting me, “ that I had fallen by the stiletto of that miscreant ; I had not then witnessed such angelic purity ; yet I must tamely submit to this. The Marquis de Mirandula must submit to his own disgrace. You have

have rescued me from death, and here I bid you depart. Go then; fly me, whoever you are; we must never meet to know each other, or the death of one of us must be the consequence."

"No," cried I, "Marquis; I am not the wretch you think me. I will not accept life a moment from your hands. It is true, that I have owed it to that wife and daughter you so rashly calumniate, and it has pleased heaven that their favour to me, should be returned to you in a way so singular, that providence evidently directed the impulse. You have only to enter your palace to be satisfied; your wife and daughter will not blush to meet you in my presence, nor shall I shrink from the interview. Danger awaits every moment you remain here."

"True," replied he, more calmly; "most true.---That villain, no doubt, is lurking near. I will follow you, you probably know the private door of the house better than I."

"You

“ You will quickly learn to do me justice,” replied I. “ Some of the servants will have been roused by our voices ; let us go to the garden door.”

A few minutes brought us thither, where we found the porter just risen from his bed, and preparing to resist any attack on the house. He opened the door on our discovering ourselves, and we entered the anti-chamber. He was going to ring the alarm bell, to awaken the servants, but the Marquis commanded him to be silent, to fasten the door, and attend us with a light to his chamber.

The Marquis, when he first saw me on our entrance, started with evident surprise, which I would have attributed to his alarm at seeing me dressed in the uniform of his enemies, had not his subsequent actions informed me that other reflections passed through his mind.

He desired that I would follow him with caution, he having reasons of the utmost magnitude, to conceal his arrival for some time.

time. "For," said he, "you know not what at this moment hangs over me."

We proceeded to a room, of which he had the key, then taking the light from the porter, he ordered him to go and prepare some refreshment in half an hour, and at his peril to awaken his lady.

Having closed the door, and placed the lamp upon the table, he turned suddenly round, gazing at me with earnestness a few moments before he spoke, while his countenance betrayed extreme agitation, not a little heightened by the derangement of his dress, and the fatigues and dangers he had undergone: His cloak was torn, and his whole dress stained with blood, and discoloured with dust.

"My eyes," said he, at length; "my senses conspire this night to confound me. You will excuse my freedom, which the moment inspires; of what part of Spain are you?" "Castille."—"And your name?" "Lorenzo." "And your family?"

"Pardon

“ Pardon me,” said I, colouring, “ I have particular reasons for concealing my family ; reasons, that I am certain can no way affect you; nor is it material towards proving that I am no dishonorable intruder into this house.”

“ Who, and whatever you are,” replied he, in some confusion, “ I am now ready to attend to your explanation, would to heaven you can prove your innocence.”

I explained to him the rank I held in the Spanish army; the unfortunate adventure which had introduced me to his family, and without the most distant hint of my intended flight, or the motive, I merely mentioned, that I was standing on the balcony to enjoy the cool breezes of the night, when I was so fortunate as to render him service.-

“ It is enough,” replied he, bowing ; “ I am greatly your debtor ; excuse my absence for five minutes. This is a night in which much must be done.”

With

With these words he retired, leaving me not a little astonished at this singularity of behaviour. I suspected that he was gone to learn a confirmation of what I had told him, from his wife and daughter, before he should fully grant me his confidence : a suspicion, which, while it roused my pride, I could not but allow was excusable.

I did not remain long in suspense, before he returned, with a countenance even more solemn than he had before displayed. He sat down near me, and looking in my face : “Lorenzo,” said he, “were you ever in love ? Is your heart at this moment engaged by that most dangerous of passions ?”

I started at so unexpected a question, the import of which I could only surmise, and was unable to answer, revolving in silence, the part I had now most reluctantly to perform. I made not the smallest doubt, but in the first and abrupt examination of the Marquesa and her daughter, the secret of
the

the latter had inadvertently been disclosed. But it appeared next to miraculous, that a man of the Marquis's family should thus, in a moment, resolve to bestow his only daughter on a stranger, and that stranger ranking in opposite warfare. Every probable reason failed me, while I lamented the repulse I must necessarily give, and regretted that I had delayed a day in executing my projected flight. What, thought I, will be the rage of the Marquis, and the feelings of his too amiable daughter ; and how shall I find expressions sufficiently delicate, not to abuse the high favour shewn me ?

The Marquis sat regarding the working of my countenance with so much attentive eagerness, that he trembled with impatience for my reply.

“ You hesitate,” said he ; “ perhaps the very existence of my family depends on your answer ; be then as candid as I have hitherto found you.”

“ Good

"Good heavens," said I, more embarrassed than before ; "Why ? Wherefore ? How is it possible that your house, or your family can be interested ?"

"That is our greatest misfortune," replied he, rising, and walking from me.

This speech, which I conceived to be slighting, roused my pride, and I determined to shew him, that I would not increase his misfortunes by accepting his offer.

"Believe me," said I, "I sincerely lament this misfortune ; but my heart and my affections have been *long* engaged."

He turned round with satisfaction, at these words, and again sat down. "I rejoice," said he, "at what you tell me. You are then positively engaged, and you have been long so ?" "It is true."

"Then the offer I am going to make, will, perhaps, not be so dangerous."

"I am all amazement," returned I, wholly unable to guess at what these insinuations might mean. "Your Excellenza may command every service in my power."

"I thank

“ I thank you,” replied he, taking my hand. “ Your countenance demands my confidence. You see before you at this moment, a man utterly ruined, and whose calmness only arises from despair.”

“ On this fatal day the provincial army has suffered a total and irretrievable defeat; those who did not fall before the sword, have either been taken prisoners, or have fled and dispersed. I escaped by a variety of accidents; two horses have fallen beneath me in my flight hither. I was attended in my flight by a man who joined us some weeks since; I knew him to be a person of desperate fortune, having known him many years since in profligate affluence. He knew that I had about me all the money and jewels I could carry off in my haste. You know the event. It is by your means that I am enabled to offer to your guardianship the half of my fortune, which remains in moveable property, together with my wife and daughter. I myself must fly before the day dawns, I know not whither.

These

These lands and this mansion will become a scene of desolation ; I almost fancy, that even now the shouts of the soldiers sound in my ears. You seem to hesitate. You think it extraordinary, no doubt, that half an hour ago, and I was ready to destroy you, for a supposed familiarity with those relations, and now I offer them to your sole protection. But I confide in your honor. I confide in the integrity of your countenance, which reminds me of a person, that I should have been proud to consider as a friend : but above all I confide in your prepossession for another, for if you sincerely love, my daughter will not have power to move you. Tell me then, if you have courage to accept this office of friendship ; and generosity sufficient to rescue from positive destruction, the family of a man who has ranked against you ; and if you have fortitude sufficient to resist the temptation, which the beauty of Christiana might hold out to you, in opposition to the interests of your first love !”

Here

Here the Marquis made a solemn pause. I had been too strongly agitated with various reflections, while he had been speaking, to attempt interrupting him. I secretly feared the greatness of the undertaking, and the various feelings it involved. How should I steel my heart against the silent and modest passion of Christiana. How should I, almost a stranger to the modes of mankind, preserve with decorum, the character of guardian to two ladies. What asylum could I offer? In a word, I myself had almost an equal need of protection; not to mention the innumerable embarrassments it would subject me to. On the other hand, it was impossible to refuse. I saw impending desolation striding with a rapid movement; every moment was important, for on a moment might depend our escape from the flood of calamity, which was rolling in rapine and flame over the surface of the country.

“Am I to read in your silence, a denial?” said the Marquis, with a deep groan, and visible paleness.

“Does your lady and daughter know of your propofal?” demanded I.

“No,” cried he, “they are at this moment in fancied fecurity. They dream not of the horrors preparing for them; but by the Holy Virgin, if you do not undertake their protection, I will poignard them this dreadful night. Never, never fhall they remain to be violated by an infolent soldiery. My perfon is too well known to protect them. To fend them away alone, is to expofe them to every outrage beneath the fun. This night they muft die, unlefs ----Speak, Lorenzo. Swear by the Great Creator of the Univerfe, that you will not abandon them.”

“It is too much,” cried I, unable to reftain my tears, at the terrible picture his words prefented, and which my experience told me was true. “I agree;---give me your inftructions; the clock is now ftriking twelve: Alas, in one hour, what misfortunes may come upon us!”

“Be

“Be cool,” said the Marquis, trembling. “My soul is torn to pieces ; but you see I preserve my senses. How many in my situation would spend the time in the ravings of despair. I shall, if possible quit the kingdom. For six months at least, I request you to remain in concealment. I shall deliver you some sealed papers, which upon honor, I charge you not to open, unless my death is positively confirmed. Here is a casket of jewels to a considerable amount, and there are two hundred pistoles in money. Take this key and open that ivory cabinet, you will there find many trinkets of great value ; take as many as you can conveniently conceal about you. I must now go to prepare my wife and daughter for this sudden reversion of fortune.”

The scene that ensued, may be more easily fancied than expressed. It was with difficulty their senses were preserved, and their spirits soothed by the arguments and pleadings

pleadings of the Marquis, who conjured them by every tie and every reason, to act with more calmness, and not destroy him, by destroying themselves.

“Alas,” said the Marquesa, “My years ill besit me for flight. Let my daughter escape, and let me remain. My infirmities will only prevent your flight, and involve us together.”

“Lorenzo must be your protector,” said the Marquis. “I must fly alone in disguise, if at all. Why, Lady Sempronia, do you sink into the woman, when we have scarce time to escape, before our house will be delivered to the sword and the flames?”

“How can I fly with Lorenzo?” said Christiana, at the same time. “Fly yourself, my dear father; bid him also haste away. Indeed I do not mind my own life; I do not fear to die.”

“But the triumph, the exultation of our enemies,” cried the Marquis. “Death is not the worst we have to fear. Lorenzo
is

is honorable. The moments admit no longer delay. Unless you act with more firmness, you will see me die at your feet, for here shall my enemies find me. Give me not cause to accuse you of pusillanimity, of worse than woman's fears. Great dangers only awaken resources in great minds. It is for the vulgar to sink before evils, they have no energy to combat. If you preserve the firmness of your mind, if you attend to my advice, our fortunes may brighten after a few months obscurity; and life be doubly pleasing for what we have suffered in preserving it. But remember that to die with honor, is better than to live with infamy."

"I am resolved," said the Marquesa, drying her tears, and suppressing her sighs.

"Christiana, my daughter, arise, and remember the world is no resting place for mortals. But why may we not retire into a convent---such a retreat would surely be more unexceptionable than the protection of a young man?"

"It

“It might be more agreeable to etiquette,” answered the Marquis, “but circumstances forbid it. Such an asylum would become your prison; you would not then be at liberty to join me, should I succeed in establishing myself either in France or Italy. But we must no longer waste the moments of action in debate. Collect your most valuable jewels; call your servants, and dispatch them on different routes with your clothes, and whatever you can confide to their care. In a few minutes attend me in my room.”

CHAP. III.

I HAD contrived to secrete jewels and small trinkets, to a large amount, together with those important papers the Marquis had given me, about my person, by the time he returned; but a large treasure of plate and other heavy articles yet remained, which would afford an ample booty to the soldiery, if the house should be subjected to pillage. These it was impossible to remove, and we had no time to bury them in the ground.

The Marquis entered the room with various emotions strongly painted on his features. "Good heavens," said he, "Lorenzo, what a night is this! Look through
the

the window. Do you see yonder rising brightness? That is the village of ----- on fire ; but a few moments, and these wretches will be here."

I looked out at these words, and my soul felt shocked at the portentous appearance. " We have no time to lose, indeed," said I, turning pale. " I hear the sound of horses along the road."

While I spoke, a loud rapping was heard at the door. The Marquis smiled faintly. " I question now," said he, " whether I escape ; but my enemies shall have some trouble to seize me with life."

The servants were now raised in the utmost confusion. The knocking proceeded from two or three stragglers, who being well mounted, had already reached the Marquis's, with the intent of alarming the family of their danger ; and not knowing that he had escaped, they informed the servants that he was slain in battle ; that the victorious troops were in rapid pursuit,

burning and plundering every village and cottage in their way.

Confusion and dismay spread with swiftness amongst the domestics. The women were incapable of attending the commands of the ladies, and the men only ran in, to demand orders of the Marquis, which their fears did not permit them to execute.

The Marquis conducted himself with admirable coolness in this moment of dreadful suspense. He left to my care, providing for our escape; and hurrying away, he exhorted the servants to fortitude, and giving to each a sum of money and piece of plate, according to their services, he directed them the way they should fly, delivering the women to their protection; and in less than five minutes, there was not one domestic left in the house.

In the mean time I hastened to the stables, where I found two mules, the only cattle the Marquis had reserved from the service of the provincial forces: these I immediately saddled, and leaving them standing,

standing, hastened to the apartments of the ladies ; propriety being now banished by the increasing terrors of the hour.

The trampling of horses was now heard every moment. The voices of men, and the cries of women driven from their homes, with their almost naked children, rent the air of night ; and the spreading redness at the edge of the horizon, proclaimed the inevitable approach of destruction.

I found the Marquis locked in the embraces of his wife and daughter. Not a word was spoken, for the grief of each was too mighty for utterance.

We were now alarmed by a violent thundering at the great gate, and the smashing of the glass in the windows.

“ I must be gone,” cried the Marquis. “ This is the edge of the tempest ; the storm rapidly comes on. Lorenzo, to your honor and discretion I commit these precious reliques of a ruined house. Would to heaven I had never enlisted in this desperate enterprize ! Ha ! they already shout

at a distance. Adieu ! Be calm,---be collected. Adieu. Do not delay."

As he uttered these last words, he moved towards the door, having torn himself from the silent embraces of his lady and daughter, who, pale as death, were every moment sinking to the ground.

A gentle violence was absolutely necessary to tear them away from this chamber, but in passing the door of the Marquis's room, where a light burnt faintly and alone, the Marquesa, unable longer to sustain the oppression of her spirits, sunk upon my arm. A silence of horrible portent reigned in the house, all the servants having long since fled, while without, the clamour and confusion was increasing and dreadful.

What were my feelings at that moment, I myself am unable to describe. Christina hung about her mother, and happily her tears relieved in some degree the oppression of her soul. In these moments of awful suspense, I expected every moment
that

that the house would become a prey to plunder, even by the vanquished forces, whose situation made them desperate, and as much to be feared as the enemy that pursued them.

A volley of small arms rattled through the windows where the light shone, and at the same moment we were alarmed by the tremendous crash of the outer door, which was split into pieces. A mingled uproar of oaths and shouts came forward up the great stairs, and it was evident the ruffians were intent upon plunder.

Christiana uttered a faint scream, and fell upon my arm, already employed in supporting her mother. "Great God," cried I, drawing my sword, "grant me coolness and strength in this important hour!"

The party who had forced the door, rushed up the stairs with incredible noise. Every thing seemed falling to pieces around them. They quickly filled the rooms, and fell to plunder; while a select band,

headed by a fierce and singularly habited ruffian, advanced towards me, uttering the most hideous outcries, and calling aloud for the Marquis with the most savage threatenings.

Their weapons were raised in an instant to my face. Their appearance was more like a banditti than soldiers, for their rebellious uniforms were torn, dusty, and bloody, and their own imminent danger gave a ferocity to their features, that almost obliterated the lineaments of man.

“Where is the Marquis? Where is Mirandula?” cried they at once.

“In that chamber,” replied I, pointing to his apartment.

“Dispatch this man,” cried the leader of the band, whom I now recollected to be Filelfo, as he turned his eyes upon me with a malicious grin.

“Give him no quarter--I have nobler game in view.”

One or two lifted up their swords to obey him. “Stay, comrades,” cried I.

“You

“You mistake; this is only a disguise that I wear, the better to escape. Haste after them;---all the jewels and plate of the Marquis are in that chamber.” The mention of the treasure instantly diverted their attention, and in their haste they had nearly fallen out with each other.

This was the only moment for escape. I raised the Marquesa on my shoulder, and grasping Christiana by the arm, hurried as fast as possible towards the stable, while the banditti in the house were tearing down the very wainscots, and destroying the furniture, from the mere spirit of mischief, or in search of fancied treasure.

At the gate stood two men they had had the precaution to station. It was fortunately extremely dark, and without opposing my passage, they inquired if the lady I carried was dead.

“Yes,” said I. “Haste up stairs; there is Filelfo, and all our comrades, loading themselves with treasure; there is more than they can all carry away.” “Come

along, my boy," cried one of them. "We must take care of ourselves; those fellows will not give us any of their plunder for standing here." "Right; right;" answered he, roughly. "We shall none of us stand long, I fancy :---the country is all in a blaze."

This little accident of success inspired me with fresh courage. I soon reached the stable, where a moment later would have been irretrievable, a trooper having seized the mules, and was leading them from the door. "Halt, friend," cried I, "these are already engaged: help me to place this lady on one of them."

"May I be shot if I do;" returned he, with an oath. "What is the lady to me? My wife has broke her leg a quarter of a league from here, and she will be trod to pieces on the road, if I do not find means to convey her away."

"I am very sorry for it," replied I; "these mules are my property; I have no time either to spend in argument or fighting."

ing.—Let them go, and here is a diamond ring for your kindness.”

“Take them, master, and give me the ring,” cried he. “My wife may lay in the road if she likes it. I can easily get another; but not so easily a diamond ring.”

I made no remark on this fellow’s brutality; for time was of the utmost value, and having assisted me in fastening the ladies upon the mules, he hastened away.

Christiana had charge of a small box belonging to her mother, and one mule: while I rode before the Marquesa, whom the motion began to recover. The whole country was overspread with straggling parties of every description. Women and children were flying in all directions; and howlings, lamentations, and despair, filled the air. Several times I was obliged to use my sword against the peasants, who seized the bridles of the mules, in hopes of relieving their relations; but pity would have been my own destruction, and for
several

several miles I rode with my sword in my hand.

I was most apprehensive of falling in with the main body of the insurgents, who swept every thing before them like a flood ; and from whom I should have little chance of escaping, as my uniform would betray me.

To avoid them I struck into a cross road, which penetrated deeper into the country, towards Aragon ; the dreadful line of flame, which spread up to the heavens, serving to warn me of the roads I should avoid.

I endeavoured to inspire Christiana with spirits and confidence ; but she had too much of the female in her character to support so great a trial with other fortitude than what naturally arose from her piety ; and it was now she found in full force the efficacy of principle, and the strength of faith. These supplied her with hope, and inspired her with fortitude, by raising her superior to the dread of death, and I was astonished that her delicate frame and tender

der disposition, were capable of enduring the numberless distresses that every way encompassed us.

The road we had entered was rough, and in many places so much destroyed, that our mules were fatigued with very inconsiderable progress. We had not proceeded more than three leagues, when we entered a little village of about twenty houses. The panic had already reached this wretched place, and the inhabitants were hesitating between flight and fear.

The young and vigorous were eager to fly, while the aged, the infirm, and the children, clung round them, beseeching them, with cries and tears, not to abandon them.

I attempted to get some wine, to relieve the excessive weakness and sickness which hung upon the Marquesa; but a draught of cold water was all I could procure. From this she found considerable relief, and becoming ashamed of her own imbecility, in the midst of such public and general calamity,

mity, she roused her languid spirits to action. Partly by force, and partly by purchase, I procured another mule at this place. I halted a short time to exhort the people to more fortitude, observing that it was more than probable the army had given over the pursuit, it being now past four o'clock in the morning. While I yet spoke, a number of flying provincials entered the village, some severely wounded, some with arms, and more without. They knew not whether any one pursued them; yet so great was the alarm, that no one believed himself safe while another was before him.

I immediately left the village, and quickly found that we were in imminent danger; one wing of the army having taken this route, overspread the roads and the fields like a swarm of locusts. We found it impossible to proceed, and turning aside into a small inclosure, thickly planted with olives, determined to wait there till the roads should be more clear, or the day break upon us. In

In this situation we remained till the morning discovered that the insurgents had fled while none pursued : we ventured to leave our retreat, where we had been fortunately protected by a deep stream, which turned a mill in our rear.

The flying party were now out of sight, leaving behind them self evident marks of their route; the very cattle in the fields, and the gardens of the peasants, having been wantonly destroyed or maimed.

The Marquesa and Christiana had been greatly disguised by the assistance of the Marquis, in some of the clothes of the servants, but my uniform, which could not be mistaken, rendered us every instant liable to destruction : to prevent which, we were obliged to ride swiftly through the villages, and to put up with the poor accommodation the huts on the road afforded, paying the most exorbitant prices for the coarsest fare.

It was not always possible to procure any thing, and for many hours we were obliged

obliged to ride onwards, exposed to a violent hot sun, without alighting for a moment ; so that our mules, as well as ourselves, were nearly sinking with fatigue and thirst.

The country glowing with heat, presented no charms to us ; the tired eye turning away with disgust from the most animated landscape. To increase our sufferings, the wind raised the light dust upon the road, almost blinding us with the drifts that whirled through the air, and it required no little degree of resolution, not to sink beneath these accumulated evils.

We had travelled for several hours, over a wide and barren plain, where neither refreshment for man or beast was to be found, and our mules began to lag beneath their burden. Behind us we had left the seat of war ; before us new dangers presented themselves ; and the ladies more than once declared it was impossible they could proceed much further.

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In truth I was tempted to sit down with them upon the desolate plain, and await the event, for my spirits and strength were equally exhausted, and the desire of life had scarce power to animate me.

The dull and heavy silence of nature spread every way around us; even the cry of despair could not reach us. Population seemed banished from this region, and wherever the eye turned in search of shelter or inhabitant, it beheld only an extensive waste, bounded by a thick vapour the heat had exhaled; nor did a single shepherd's hut flatter the traveller with relief.

Every moment on the point of yielding to our fate, and too much dispirited to offer comfort to each other, we slowly and silently continued to creep forward, till the milder rays of the evening sun began in some degree to cool the excessive and oppressive heat which exhausted our spirits. Still, however, no cottage or village appeared, where we might hope for refreshment,

ment, and rest from the advancing night, whose damp and chill air threatened nothing less than death to the ladies.

A clump of dwarf trees and shrubs at a distance from the road, invited our regard; and we turned aside towards them, in hopes of finding some spring to allay our thirst, and refresh our mules. We were fortunately not disappointed; a beautiful though narrow stream breaking its way through a circle of moss, giving verdure to the ground for a considerable distance.

It was with infinite pleasure we alighted to taste of this fountain in our way. The choicest wines would not have been more delicious, nor should we have felt all the horrors of our situation, if nature had required no other refreshment. It was necessary we should not remain long on this spot; but the few moments given to rest had so stiffened our limbs, that when the Marquesa attempted to stand, she sunk upon the ground, incapable of supporting herself. Christiana was so much overcome,
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that she desired we would permit her to sleep; and it was with much difficulty I could prevent the lethargy which bent down her eye-lids, from closing them for ever.

How weak a creature is man, when at a distance from the aids of society, he is every moment liable to sink beneath the burthen of his own existence! and from the lowest to the highest we require mutual and unceasing support. What are the resources of human reason! How vain is the boast of our knowledge! Without society we become imbecile as infants, and more exposed to danger, than any other being which inhabits the earth's circumference.

Such were my reflections as we sat beside this pleasant spring, so much overcome with the length and difficulties of our journey, that I very much doubted whether we should ever proceed from this spot.

Our mules refreshed themselves with grazing on the short-tufted grass, and tender leaves of some oziers, while we sat without uttering a word, except to rouse

Donna

Donna Christiana from the oppressive sensation of sleep which caused her to behold with indifference every hope we could place before her.

It is probable we might have remained upon the damp ground till our stiffened limbs had wholly refused their office ; and the morning sun would have found us stretched upon the plain: but when we could least have expected it, relief was at hand.

The shades of night began to gather on the plain, and to circumscribe the boundary of fight. The chill winds of the evening caused us to sit close, though we had neither power nor resolution to rise; and Christiana, unconscious of any impropriety, leaned upon my bosom, while her mother reclined upon my arm.

From this forlorn situation we were soon roused by the trampling of a horse at full gallop, which seemed every moment to advance nearer the thicket. I had too much indifference to attempt any defence, whatever might be the consequence ; and
this

this indifference I can only attribute to a malady of the mind, when the nerves have been exerted beyond their tone.

In a short time the horseman entered the thicket at full gallop; but as soon as he beheld us, he turned round on the spot, and was about to retreat, when I begged him to give us some assistance, or send us help from the next village.

“Do you know what you ask of me?” cried he, stopping his horse. “By the mass, ’tis as if you had asked me to go and hang myself. Do you think I durst venture into any town or village, mounted in this delicious manner? (pointing to two casks of aqua vitæ which were balanced behind him.) Beside there is not a village, nor the least bit of any thing like one, for many a good league. However, I see plain enough what you want---you have been drinking nothing but water, and that don’t agree with a Christian: it may be good enough for a Moor. But we’ll have

have a cup of the best fort that ever crossed the Pyrenees."

From this speech it was easy to guess this stranger was a smuggler. He was not long in quitting his horse, and fastening him to the stump of an old withered tree. He untied the kegs, and placing them upon the ground, came close to me, more minutely to examine who it was that thus stood in need of his assistance; for I before observed to you that the evening began to throw twilight amongst the bushes of this little retreat.

He started on perceiving my uniform, which before he could not distinctly do, the ladies sitting before me.

"By the mass," said he, "I have made a flight mistake; I must be gone. But, however, Cavalier, if you stand in so much need as you seem to do, I will venture to give you a glass."

"My friend," replied I, "at present I have not the power to betray you, if I had the will; but rest assured, and I speak upon the
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the honor of a Castilian, that if I ever have the power, I shall not have the will, provided you assist these unfortunate persons, whom I have endeavoured, though very unwell myself, to rescue from the miseries of war."

"It is well said, Cavalier," replied he, running to his horse; "a Spaniard never breaks the word he has given; and by the mass, I am glad to have tumbled on such good company, when I expected to be sitting by myself all night, with only my horse, and a good dram of aqua vitæ to comfort me. Perhaps, Cavalier, the ladies may not like to partake of my supper, but such as it is, they are heartily welcome. I am not so blind, that I cannot see the honor I have in your company. When I was in my better days, I was company for those that don't know me now. But no matter for that; *Hang care and drive away sorrow; the wretched to-day may be happy to-morrow.* Beside, it is time enough to fret

fret when all the brandy is gone, and there is a pretty deal of it left yet."

I had neither power nor inclination to stop the eloquence of this strange character, who, whatever might be his present situation, had certainly known better days; and above the harsh traits of his occupation, hospitality was evidently paramount.

From the front of his saddle, he untied an old bag and a pair of pistols, which he thrust into a broad leathern belt; then securing one keg among the bushes, he approached us with the other, and sat down before us on the grass. Without speaking a word, he began to empty his bag, turning out upon the grass several pieces of broken bread, some cheese, garlic, and hard eggs; these he arranged upon an old piece of sail-cloth, that had served to cover the keg when he rode. An old wooden cup, which he filled with brandy, and a large clasp knife, finished the decoration of this rural repast.

I had

I had sufficient time to examine the figure of this our entertainer, while he was intent upon laying out the viands to the best advantage, and must confess, that under any other circumstances I should not have been charmed with his company.

He was rather above the middle height, with broad features, and swarthy complexion, his eyes full of vivacity, and there was more of boldness in his face than malice or cunning, yet that boldness was not altogether pleasing; and the abrupt and somewhat rough turn of his speeches, at times, shewed that he could act the bravo; to which character his mustachoes, extending from ear to ear, gave no little support. His dress was a mixture of French and Spanish, of the different colours of crimson and black, both so much tarnished by the weather, that the original tints were only to be guessed at. Round his waist was a broad leathern belt, in which were placed two matchless pistols and an old sword. Over his shoulders hung an old-rusty cloak,

and his head was covered by an enormous hat, decorated with a broken feather. He wore French boots, much too large, and certainly, had he been thrown from his horse by accident, he would not easily have escaped from a pursuit.

Such are the outlines of a man, to whom we were to be so essentially indebted, and whose name he told me was Nugnez.

When he had spread all his stores upon the ground, he invited us to partake, himself setting us the example, by first drinking a cup full of brandy.

The long fast we had suffered, had deprived us of any inclination to eat, and certainly the food before us was not the most tempting ; but knowing the necessity there was to overcome this repugnance, I prevailed on the ladies with some difficulty to take a crust of bread, with some brandy and water, which produced so great an effect upon their spirits, that they seemed inspired with new strength and life.

Núñez congratulated them on their visible recovery, which he imputed to the excellent virtues of brandy, running on in its praises, and doing honor to his sentiments by so many libations, that I began to fear we should experience its opposite qualities.

“Come, Cavalier,” said he, “you must empty another cup, and then we shall all be chirping merry. My grandmother used to say, that care was drowned in the bottom of a barrel of wine, as he was attempting to drink at the edge; and ’pon my honor I think there’s some little truth in the saying. You are the most fortunate man in all Spain, Cavalier.”

“How so?” demanded I, expecting he meant me some compliment on the score of the ladies.

“Do you mean to remain here all night?”-----“Not willingly,” I replied, “but I am a stranger to the country, and do not know the way to the next town.”

“That’s the reason,” cried he, laughing, “that I said you were most fortunate.

Have you not met with me? And don't I know every town and village in Spain? I can travel from the Pyrenees to Andalusia, from the Mediterranean to the Bay of Biscay, and never enter a town. There is not a track, a defile, or a pass, that I don't know. I would wager my horse and the two kegs of aqua vitæ, that I would lead an army of ten thousand men from any quarter of the kingdom to Madrid; and nobody at the distance of a quarter of a league should ever hear of them on the road. I wish I had been a general, I should have outdone Hannibal, or even Cortez himself. I would have shewn them what it was to be taken by surprize. I would have popped upon them, when they thought me fifty leagues off. I would-----"

The ladies, dejected as they were, could not refrain smiling at the grotesque character of this man, who seemed unwilling any one should speak but himself, now that his spirits were elevated by the liberal draughts he had taken. But night
fast

fast approaching, I was obliged to interrupt him, that I might learn if possible, the route we should pursue.

I was not indeed altogether satisfied with our strange friend, suspecting that this solitary spot might be a rendezvous for their company ; nor could I be certain that temptation might not induce them to other practices than smuggling ; for when once a man's conscience permits him to overleap the law, he cannot himself say when he will stop.

I had indeed carefully concealed the treasure I possessed, but it was natural to suppose, we had not fled without property ; and I had observed him several times fix his eye upon the Marquesa's little box.

Nugnez replied to my question, at the same time that he busied himself in collecting the remains of our repast “ It is several leagues to any town ; but if you dare trust yourselves to my protection, I will conduct you to a house, where you

will find every refreshment. I am going thither myself, and only turned in here to take a whet by the way."

I knew not how to accept or refuse this proposal. I considered that the hazard we ran by appearing in public, was nearly equal to what we should incur amongst a company of smugglers. So long a want of rest, and our extreme fatigue, rendered it morally impossible the ladies could proceed much farther, and deciding upon circumstances, without appearing to hesitate or doubt his honor, I accepted his proposal with the greatest marks of satisfaction.

It was evident the compliment I paid to his honesty, did not lose its effect ; he started up with an alacrity proceeding from good will, and began immediately to prepare his horse.

"I will assist you directly," said he, "to place the ladies on their mules ; we shall not have much time to throw away, I can tell you. I will lead you to a place, which even an inquisitor would never find out. I
only

only wish I was to be your guide to any part of Spain or the frontiers, with the whole army behind us ; you would see what a dance I would lead them, and yet not be more than two or three leagues before them. You think perhaps, Cavalier, that I boast and lie like a Frenchman, but my trade requires this knowledge, and a man should never be ashamed of the trade he lives by ; whether he is a courtier, a lawyer, or a smuggler ; body of me, but it is all one, so as a man gets a living honestly !”

I had penetrated so far into the character of Master Nugnez, as to perceive, that nothing could please him better, than to attend without interruption to his loquacity, which was broken repeatedly by loud fits of laughter.

Assisted by Nugnez, the ladies were once more placed upon their mules, and we left this lone retreat, as the mists of night shed obscurity over the extended plain before and behind us. Nothing, certainly can be

more desolate and dreary, than wandering over a far spread waste, when night canopies the earth in darkness, and the cold winds blow over us.

The volubility of our guide, and the surprizing stories he entertained us with, diminished the apprehension silence would have created, and prevented our feeling in full force, the uncertain issue of our enterprise. The flow of his spirits prevented the total depression of our own, and the length of the way was shortened in calculation. The barren level of the plains, by degrees was broken in upon by swelling hills, and after we had wandered some time, through the misty darkness, we found ourselves suddenly entering a narrow defile, which wound between mountains, whose black summits we could not distinguish from the hanging clouds, or the shades of night, but by their superior darkness.

Nugnez became at once silent and cautious. I cast my eyes upon the promiscuous confusion of mountains and clouds, and remembering

remembering the romantic valley of St. Helma, and its inhabitants, I forgot that Christiana was riding beside me ; I forgot the presence of her mother, and our guide, and sighing deeply, I exclaimed ; “ Happy retreat !---here the innocent need not tremble at the turbulence of war, and the weary may repose in peace. Take me, ye still and peaceful shades, to your recesses ; and let me recline on the borders of the murmuring stream. Let the willow and the palm wave over my head, and the whispers of the voice that I love, lull me to slumber !”

A deep sigh from Christiana, and a loud laugh from Nugnez awoke me from my soliloquy. “ Truly, Cavalier, I did not promise you any thing of the kind, and I fear you will be wonderfully disappointed. These mountains are very bare of trees, and water tumbles from the rocks, without a single flower, unless you can spy a little tormental on the broken edge of a cliff. This chain runs from Tarragonna to Pam-

plona, where it joins the Pyrenees ; we shall continue amongst them, till we come to the side of the Ebra, when you may cross into Navarre, and be perfectly safe from the seat of war."

" You seem to understand my intentions very well," replied I. " Supposing us in Navarre, which will be the most prudent method of acting ?"

" You may then cross into France," said he, " without the smallest danger, if you intend leaving Spain ; or I can give you a passport to any safe retreat, where you may remain concealed for a twelve-month ; or what may be better than either, I myself will accompany you, if you have sufficient to pay for my trouble."

" That is very frank," replied I, " I will be as free with you. I am a soldier of fortune, my possessions are no more than my daily pay, and it is from motives of gratitude and obligation, that I have endeavoured to preserve these unfortunate companions of my journey from the destruction

tion of civil war. I acknowledge that they are ladies, but their fortune is destroyed, and their house was plundering before our eyes, while we escaped with difficulty."

"Don't say a word more," cried he, "you may spare your breath. I have told you my name was Nugnez, that's enough: we shall soon reach the end of our night's journey, which I suppose these ladies will not be sorry for. Mind, however, to be silent as to who or what you are, and leave the rest to me."

This advice was by no means calculated to lessen my suspicions. But whatever they might be, and whatever might be the event, there now remained no alternative; and I endeavoured to animate the spirits of the Marquesa and Christiana, who were sinking into their former despondency.

Nugnez now changed the order of our march. "These hills," said he, "run almost together at their base; there is no path, and it is difficult to unravel the labyrinth. I caution you to follow me in silence.

silence. Some of my friends might hear your voice, and spread an unnecessary alarm."

"Good heavens," exclaimed I, "have you then betrayed us! Who are your friends?"

"Follow me, and you will soon see," replied he, roughly; "I understand your suspicions."

"By all that is good," cried I, "if they are just-----"

"And what if they are?" returned he, fiercely, "How will you proceed? What will you do? What is your power?"

"Wherefore is this?" said the Marquesa, suppressing her tears, "Lorenzo, you injure our friend Nugnez by your suspicions. Do you not know that the officers of customs are ever on the watch to detect any source of diminution in the revenue, and have you so soon forgotten the occupation of our friend and his companions? And you Nugnez, you must impute this sudden and unjust suggestion, to the awful impressions

sions of these dismal hills, and those deep vallies, which the eye cannot fathom, and which seem capable of giving shelter to an army!"

"Lady," replied Nugnez, "I am willing to forgive the Cavalier's injustice; but had I not already cautioned him to prudence where we are going, and where such an expression would have instantly cost him his life!--there are those amongst us, who are only honest from necessity."

The Marquesa confessed to me afterwards, that she shuddered at this confession, and was confirmed in similar suspicions to mine, though she wisely considered it best to appear perfectly confident of the honor of Nugnez.

He placed himself with a forced complacency before us; the ladies followed, and I closed the rear; winding along a labyrinthian track, of which it was impossible to remember the mazes, nor did we at all times seem to advance the same way.

Most

Most assuredly, thought I, Nugnez spoke truth, when he boasted the secrecy of this place, for here are neither signs nor traces of human habitation. For near an hour we continued this route, without a word being spoken ; when Nugnez suddenly pausing, took from his pocket a whistle, in which he blew three times, the shrill note thrilling amongst the rocks. He paused in silence ; the echoes had ceased, when the signal was returned at some little distance ; though it was so impenetrably dark, I could not distinguish the smallest signs of a house or other abode, and the Marquesa desired to know from whence these sounds proceeded.

“ From our dwelling,” replied Nugnez ; “ all is safe and well ; we have not six paces further to advance.”

He alighted, and leading us round the corner of a large fragment of rock, which some earthquake had riven from the side of the mountain, we found a person coming to meet us, but whose figure we could

could not examine in the dark. The watch-word was given, and Nugnez taking him aside, remained a few moments before he returned to us, desiring that we would alight, for he had secured us a welcome reception.

“ Our family at present,” said he, “ is very small, there are only three of our company at home, sometimes we have ten or a dozen. If it were day, you would admire the contrivance of our dwelling, it takes in a cavity of the mountains, and runs to this rock, but it is so supported with fragments of stone, and covered with turf, like the rest of the hill, that a stranger would not conceive that it was a very comfortable residence.”

We followed Nugnez, through a door so narrow, that it might have been mistaken for a chink in the rock, and found ourselves in an anti-chamber, formed of rough pieces of rock, piled one on the other, in the manner that shepherds sometimes erect temporary shelters on the mountains, and

a tra-

a traveller who might have entered by chance, would have taken it for such ; we were conducted by a man, whose appearance would have condemned him as a rogue in any town in Spain.

His countenance was sly, and a cast which he had with his eyes, betrayed the wrong bias of his disposition. His words were flattering and smooth, not like the rough boldness of Nugnez ; but as an enemy he was the most to be dreaded, and as a friend he was not to be trusted.

“ This is an honor, your Excellenza,” said he, bowing as he led the way into the kitchen, “ such as we never before received ; and the ladies too !---never before did so much beauty grace our humble habitation. I only grieve, that we have no better entertainment to offer ; a hearty welcome sweetens every thing, and that you will receive from me and my friends. I pray you be seated, and partake in the refreshment before you : it is a late hour, we expected Master Nugnez before this.”

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At my desire the ladies seated themselves, and Nugnez hastened to prepare some hot wine and sweetmeats, of which he observed they must be greatly in need; proposing that they should retire to rest immediately after they had taken some refreshment; and this proposal I earnestly seconded, their spirits being nearly exhausted.

I feared to hazard any particular conversation, lest it might excite suspicion in those men whom even Nugnez had cautioned us to be guarded against, and who certainly were not injured by any suspicion in their disfavour. Two of them had never spoke since our entrance; but wrapped in gloomy silence, sat smoking tobacco, and drinking brandy and water beside the fire.

The whole appearance of the kitchen reminded me of the cottage of Filelfo, when I was first benighted in the forest of St. Helma, with this difference, that the walls of the roof were stone, and that so low,
that

that it was difficult to stand upright. The narrowness of the doors was so contrived to prevent a forceable entrance from without, it being easy to repel a considerable number. At the further end of the kitchen, were two doors, leading to separate apartments. There were no upper rooms to the dwelling, part of which was actually excavated out of the side of the mountains, having been gradually improved by some generations of smugglers, who handed down the secret with wonderful fidelity, nor had it ever been betrayed.

The Marquesa and Christiana having taken some refreshment, Nugnez lighted a lamp, and remarking to them that they had nothing to apprehend, more than if they were at home in profound peace, he desired them to take possession of the chamber he was going to allot them, and use it as their own. "As to your friend Lorenzo," said he, "he does not seem much less in want of rest than yourselves; we will spread him some dry sail-cloth, and

a goat's-skin before your door ; we have no other accommodation to offer him ; and if he is as much used to a foldier's profession, as we are to our's, he will not sleep the worse for the coarseness of his bed."

I saw that the proposal inspired the ladies with satisfaction ; it seemed to promise them safety from the intrusion of these ferocious looking men, from whose regard they shrunk with trembling. They immediately arose, but were unable to walk without support, which gave me an opportunity of observing the accommodations of their chamber, which I found fitted up in a style of neatness, we had no reason to expect. It contained two beds, and considerable wealth ; casks of spirits, and large chests, being piled to the roof, on one side.

In a few words, I requested the ladies to hope their misfortunes would soon be at an end, since we had escaped the first and most alarming of evils, which threat-

ended

ened us, and were now in a place of certain security.

They smiled, bidding me good night, and requesting me not to forget, that I was only recovering from a severe illness, and might bring on a relapse by my own exertions in their favour.

On my return to the kitchen, I found only one of the smugglers remaining, the two others having withdrawn to the inner room, the door of which remained open. "You will watch to-night, Gaudentia," said Nugnez, "I had my share of duty some days past, and shall now take some sleep. The Cavalier Lorenzo will sleep in the kitchen."

"All's one," said the sulky Gaudentia, who had not before deigned to speak; and wrapping himself in a large French coat, he laid a brace of pistols upon the table, and threw himself down to sleep upon a bench, which was placed on one side of the fire.

Nugnez

Nugnez then furnished out my homely couch, upon which I was very glad to lay myself, and in defiance of every suspicion, and the certain danger that surrounded us, my extreme fatigue overcame every exertion, and sunk me into a profound and continued sleep till morning.

CHAP. IV.

I WAS awakened in the morning by the preparations of these men for breakfast, and found the table spread with profusion of provisions, a large omelet, and a dish of bacon stood in the middle, with coffee and brandy.

“ You see how we live, Cavalier,” cried Nugnez, as I raised my head, looking round with my eyes half open. “ I question whether you soldiers fare so well. Here we enjoy ourselves, and laugh at the rest of the world.”

“ But you are often in danger of the gibbet or the gallies,” said I, “ How can you be happy, with these before you ?”

“ By

“By shutting our eyes that we may not see them,” replied he, pouring some brandy into a cup of coffee. “What is the future to us? Habit is every thing.”

Nothing could be more true than this proverb: How impossible would it be for half mankind to rest, if they looked into futurity, or were not accustomed to the toils and dangers of their profession. It is this, which makes a foldier sleep sound in the midst of the rattling of arms, and the cry of war. It is this, which allows the sailor to sing in the midst of a storm, and look with indifference on the boisterous waves.

I listened during breakfast, to the adventures of some of those men, who delighted to repeat their escapes from different dangers, and the artifices they had employed to elude the officers of the revenue; indeed it was easy to perceive, that perhaps, with the exception of Nugnez, they were only one remove from robbers; and I strongly suspected the fly

Gaudentia,

Gaudentia, of having been concerned in actions of this nature, from several expressions he made use of, while his eye, moving with double meaning, seemed to explain what he would not utter.

[After they had finished their breakfast, all, except Nugnez, prepared to depart, carrying with them spirits, and what very much surprized me, ingots of bullion, the exportation of which, is so strongly prohibited, but which, by this and other methods, is constantly drained from the country.

It was impossible for me to pry into the secrets of this society, which was, no doubt, of considerable extent, systematically forming a chain of connection between one country and the other, promoting a circulation of those articles, it were to be wished, would be left in the usual channels of trade.

The Marquesa and Christiana arose some time after the departure of the smugglers, and found themselves so refreshed by the
rest

rest they had taken, and to propose continuing our journey. But it now appeared that we had no fixed object in view. Nugnez declared that if we fought only for safety, there was not a place more secure in all Spain. That, for some days at least, we should be without interruption, as none of their comrades were expected before; and till their arrival we should be perfectly at our own ease, and recruit our strength and spirits, sufficiently to enable us to undertake another journey.

For the sake of my companions I readily accepted this offer, for though my heart was in the neighbourhood of Leon, the ladies who were under my protection, laid a powerful claim to every attention; and the deep and silent grief which they struggled to suppress, excited every feeling of compassion and kindness.

I made no doubt but all who knew me in the army, would believe that I had perished, and I was not so enamoured of war, as to pant for my return to the ranks,

though the necessities of my private fortune required it.

It was not without exacting the most binding promises that Nugnez permitted us to breathe the pure air of this desert spot, and even then, we were restricted to the limits of our walk. So careful were these men to guard against the shadow of suspicion, that they did not attempt the slightest cultivation, and had even rendered the pathless winding more intricate, by here and there planting briars in the midst of the way.

There was something so wild and uncouth in the views around us, that they might have inspired melancholy in the mind of the most gay. Steep and abrupt hills arose every where around, denying any extent of prospect, and running their bases so close, that in times of rain, the narrow line of valley, was generally formed into the bed of a stream, and when the water subsided, there remained in many places a stagnate swamp. No road invited
even

even the vagrant step of a casual passenger, and none but birds of prey found sufficient temptation to build their abode in the steep and barren crags of the rocks. Dreary desolation sat brooding in silence, and the profoundest thought received no interruption.

The forest of St. Helma possessed numberless charms to gratify the mind, when reflection might cease to please; its shades invited to indolent repose; its murmuring stream led to the days of romance; its flowers gratified the eye, and the warbling of its birds the ear: but here, nothing that was pleasing in nature appeared; the rain, and the burning beams of the sun, were alike uninterrupted; and a barren wilderness induced the mind to despond.

In such a situation, our only amusement must arise from ourselves, and it was then that I was perpetually on the point of relating my own story; but a false shame, and a fear of wounding the feelings of Donna Christiana, bound me in silence.

More than once, our conversation took a tender turn, and then it was difficult to escape the meaning of her expressions, and we frequently became abruptly silent.

In the hurry of our departure, we had neglected means of corresponding with the Marquis ; and it was not easy to suggest a mode of overcoming this difficulty, since we could not without hazard, acquaint any of his friends with the place to which we should hereafter retreat ; nor could I think of any other way by which he might discover us, and inform us of his fate, than by myself appearing again in public, in my usual character, while the ladies still remained concealed under my protection.

I was a stranger to any other large towns, but those of Toledo and Leon. In the former I was only known to few as a gownsmen, nor would it be prudent to proceed thither, as I should hazard the imputation of desertion, while to the latter I might have some excuse for retreating,
being

being ignorant of the present situation of the army, and what to me was a convincing argument, I might then learn the fate of Don Raphael, and perhaps again see his daughter Cornelia.

This last consideration was paramount to all others, and it was easy to induce the ladies to agree with me in the propriety of the choice.

The frank behaviour of Nugnez, though deficient in delicacy, recommended him to our confidence, and I proposed to engage him as our conductor, without promising to reward him till our arrival at Leon. The Marquesa left the whole to my discretion, and for a hundred pistoles he agreed to accompany us, as soon after the arrival of any of his company, as we should chuse to depart.

Meanwhile he employed himself in suggesting to us various disguises, as a greater means of safety, in case of any unforeseen rencounter. "It is not every one," said

he, “ that carries their true character on their outside. Now, I would undertake to transform you, Cavalier Lorenzo, into a friar: your face is so grave, and your manner so solemn, that nobody would ever suspect you for a foldier. I would swear myself, you were born to be a monk, and your own father should not know you.”

My conscience was flying in my face, at these words, which so nearly traced my fortune ; and to avoid any remarks he might make on my visible change of countenance, I inquired what character he would contrive for himself and the ladies.

“ They should be nuns,” replied he, “ were it not dangerous for nuns to travel in the company of a holy friar ; the world is so cenforious ; but we can easily convert the young lady into a scholar, under the conduct of the lady his mother ; you her confessor, and I your valet ; I will answer with my life for the success of the journey.

journey. Under such a disguise, I would travel through every city in Spain."

When I found that his proposal was serious, I made several objections to my intended habit, particularly to the disgrace I should incur upon detection.

"My dear Cavalier," said he, in a jesting tone, "monks and soldiers are more nearly allied than you imagine. They both wear an uniform, they are both distinct classes in society, and are both unproductive. I could run the parallel much farther, and if you had ever been a monk, you would readily conceive the extent of my meaning. I acknowledge that it is not altogether so good a travelling habit as that of a soldier, but it will procure us sufficient respect, and ensure us from suspicion."

I had not much aversion to this disguise, for the early part of my life, as well as my disposition, well adapted me to the character, and in company with the father's themselves, I should not have feared ex-

posing my ignorance. Christiana made more objection to changing the appearance of her sex ; and indeed so doing, subjected her to numberless difficulties, her extreme delicacy could scarcely support ; but at the same time, it was a protection superior to any other.

When we had determined on the adoption of these disguises, it took up some time to prepare them, and to accustom ourselves to wear them without restraint ; and as the time drew near, that Nugnez expected the return of his companions, we laid them aside that our strange appearance might not give rise to some unpleasant mistake.

About ten days after the departure of the party, they returned, and the same evening several others arrived from a different route.

During all the time of our stay in this place we had never seen either a shepherd or vagrant traveller, and it is possible that except the smugglers, no human
being

being might visit the place in the life time of a man. It wanted only fertility to make it a retreat, truly desirable to those who wished a seclusion from society, or without interruption to meditate on, and repent of the crimes of former days.

We retired to take a walk on the return of the company, that we might not be any controul upon their councils. For about two hours, we amused ourselves with clambering the steeps, but the summit did not present us any more enlivened picture than the base, all being alike barren and rugged. On our return we were met by Nugnez, with a countenance very different from the gaiety that usually sported upon it.

“We must be gone this very night,” said he; “our company are going to depart different ways, and the entrance to our retreat will be blocked up with fragments of rock. We have information that this place is suspected; a miscreant who has heard of it, but was never here, and who once

belonged to this society, has given scent to the archers. He has lived for some time by discovering our haunts ; but his reign will not be long : some of our chosen spirits have sworn to hunt him down."

He accompanied these words with a fierce look.

"We are ready to attend you at an hour's notice," replied I; "the mules which brought us hither have had liberty to range and recover strength, and we have only to accommodate our dresses."

"By the mass," said he, laughing. "my companions will think us mad. Were it not for the pleasure I promise myself in this adventure, and my word given to the ladies, I should engage myself in other employments. I propose, Cavalier, that we strike over the mountains that divide old Castille, and passing near the city of Burgos, pursue our way to Leon."

I had no objection to make to this arrangement, leaving the direction of our route to him, who so well knew the intricate
and

and forsaken roads of the country. We found the little cabin filled with noise and smoke, every one solacing himself with brandy and tobacco; amongst which, they repeated vows of vengeance against the traitor who had betrayed them, and I fancied that several times I heard the name of Filelfo.

I whispered Nugnez, to inquire if this was the man, and was not a little astonished, to learn that it was no other; that he had many years been thought dead, but had returned from nobody knew where, and as they would not admit him again amongst them, he had, to revenge himself, become informer.

I concealed my knowledge of this infamous character from Nugnez, and having disguised myself in an old habit of the benedictines, which we had found among the stores, I sat down at the request of these men, to partake in their entertainment; and certainly so motly a group, half lost in the fumes of tobacco, I had never seen before.

About eleven o'clock we mounted our mules, and pledging our honor to the company, that we would not betray them, we began once more to wind through the intricate labyrinths, with which Nugnez seemed to be perfectly familiar.

It was not necessary that we should travel in so much haste, as when the roar of war ran behind us; we therefore leisurely traced our way; the moon lighting up the opening landscape with its pensive lustre, and leading forward the mind into sublime reflections.

When the day dawned upon us, the country opened to our view, stretching far beneath us like a painted map, or a garden divided into beds of variegated flowers, in the midst of large spaces of brown pasturage, which the sun had exhausted of freshness. The charms of nature are ill bestowed upon those who carry cause for sad reflection in their breast, and who have a distant object of hope, which they fear, yet are eager to attain; they pass

pass, unheeded, the greatest beauties of creation, and even the sublime and the grand, scarce arrest their attention.

We stopped not a moment to gaze upon the landscape before us, but followed the paces of Nugnez, who pointed out to us a little cluster of houses, surrounded by a grove of olives, where he informed us we might safely rest for two or three hours.

The distance deceived our sight; the road which led thither winding so much that it was noon before we gained the village, where our accommodations were so miserable, that we could not find a bed to repose on; and after resting for about two hours in a wretched hovel, the owners of which were but just recovering from a fit of sickness, we again began to move forward.

About two hours after dark we gained another cluster of houses, where we were glad to remain, notwithstanding the want of every thing that could be called convenience; and here it was that Christiana
first

first found the great inconvenience of her dress; and she must have remained all night in the little chamber which was allotted to me and Nugnez, had I not contrived that a coarse kind of bed should be made up for her upon the floor of the room where her mother was to sleep, who pretended she could not sleep found if her son was out of her call in the night.

To relate to you all the minute and unpleasant circumstances we encountered, would be to exhaust your patience, and occupy that time which is so rapidly flying; but I cannot pass over unnoticed a little incident which occurred to us on the fourth day of our journey, which was a mean of discovering to me, that the Marquesa had other sources of sorrow, than the absence of her husband, and the ruin of their fortune.

It was six o'clock in the evening, after a very sultry day, that we arrived, covered with dust, at a little village, where a few neatly dressed girls had assembled on a small green to dance.

A youth, whose features were embrowned by the sun, and whose dress was composed of various fragments, sat upon the bench at the door of a cottage, playing upon a guitar, which he touched with a master's finger. His dark eyes were full of fire, and the intelligence of his countenance, bespoke his interest in the festivity around him.

We advanced towards the little throng, who ceased their sport at sight of so singular a group as we exhibited, advancing with funeral slowness. The musician made a low obeisance as we passed him; and speaking to a countryman who stood near the peasant ran up to us, and offered us a lodging in his cottage, if we did not think it too mean.

His hospitality was accepted with thanks, and we turned round to the cottage, before which the villagers were assembled. We quickly learned that the occasion of this joy was a marriage in the village, which the accidental arrival of this vagrant musician had contributed greatly to enliven.

The

The wife of the peasant, who had thus unexpectedly received us under his care, was good natured and talkative; and while she spread before us the best her cottage afforded, she entertained us with the loves of the new married pair; but even her eloquence was silenced when the young musician began again to play, which he did with so much spirit and grace that we all listened to him with delight.

We continued to sit for some time after we had finished our repast, listening to the variety of airs which he played; but suddenly changing from the brisk allegro, he sunk into the plaintive; his hearers, as if actuated by the magic of sound, ceased at once to dance, standing in different attitudes, or gathering round him to listen, fearful that their motions might interrupt him.

“Let us quit the house,” said the Marquesa, “and take a look at this wonderful boy. Where can he have learnt so much skill? some of his symphonies are conducted

ducted with exquisite art, while his original airs possess so much true melody, that they thrill over the nerves in unison."

Christiana arose without speaking, and giving me her hand, we went on to the green, taking a seat upon a little bench, a few yards from the musician, where we sat down, fearful of interrupting him.

After he had performed a variety of airs, some of them familiar, and some of them foreign; the village youths and maidens, no longer desirous of dancing, sat down on the grass around him, each with their partner: and love might have been traced in many a tender regard.

After looking round him with a smile at this rural arrangement, he rested himself a few moments, and the busy hum of praise was whispered round. Again he resumed his instrument, and listening expectation was hushed into silence. The mildness of the evening gave a peculiar charm to the plaintive tones of the instrument. He cast a look towards us,
and

and after striking one or two chords, he sang this ballad in a strain so simple, and so pleasing, that every line, and every tone of his voice fixed itself on my memory.

THE PILGRIM BOY.

A BALLAD.

I.

I have been to the holy land,
 I have been at the Christian shrine;
 But the Pagan, with ruthless hand,
 Has deform'd the temple divine,
 Jerusalem city, how fam'd,
 Thy praises did thousands employ,
 But thy glory now scarce can be nam'd
 In the song of a pilgrim boy.

2.

I have been at the Holy Land,
 I have been upon Calvary's mount;
 But had I whole years at command,
 My sorrows I could not recount.
 I have wept at the sorrows of him,
 Who wept that we all might have joy;
 Ye Christians, then make him your theme,
 As he is of the pilgrim boy.

I have

3.

I have been to the Holy Land,
 I have seen where the vintage smil'd;
 But now 'tis a desert of sand,
 The gardens a horrible wild :
 The temples, the cities o'erthrown,
 By Pagans let forth to destroy :
 By its people now could not be known,
 How much less by the pilgrim boy.

4.

I have been to the Holy Land,
 Where the daughters of Zion once sung,
 But the wretched nor now understand
 The music that flow'd from their tongue,
 I have travell'd in hunger and pain,
 From Jerusalem even to Troy ;
 Then pity, ye children of Spain,
 The song of a poor pilgrim boy.*

This last appeal was irresistible---I started up, and running towards him, presented him with a pistole, which he received with a look of gratitude, and yet with a grace peculiar to himself. A pretty maiden,

* This Song, set to music, may be had of G. WALKER, Music seller, 106, *Great Portland-street*, Price 1s.

who

who had sat with her eyes earnestly fixed upon this enchanting musician, advanced, and presented him a little silver coin, which from its brightness she had no doubt, long regarded as a treasure; she requested him with a blush which spread over her face a thousand beauties, to sing them a love song.

“That I will, my fair maid,” replied he; “but I never sing of love for hire.--- Let me return your present, which you are to keep for my sake.” I reassumed my seat beside Christiana, whose eyes overspread with the sympathetic emotions of her bosom; and the Marquesa seemed deeply concerned. We expected something extremely tender and pathetic; but striking over the strings of his guitar in a playful manner, he sang this little air.

1.

Blooming virgins cease your pining,

Winter flies, and spring returns;

All that's fair and gay, combining,

Round the youthful heart entwining,

Leads to love, and softly burns.

2.

Pleasing fancies, wishes stealing,
 By unknown desires posselt,
 What can cause this new-born feeling,
 Which the conscious maid concealing,
 Hides more closely in her breast.*

Christiana blushed as the arch musician turned his eye upon her. The Marquesa sighing deeply, said, "this youth is certainly of better birth than his situation seems to say.---He is, possibly, lost to his sorrowing parents, and now is become a vagrant for bread.---Alas, how do I know but my own child is straying deserted and forlorn, dependant on the hand of charity!"

While the Marquesa pronounced these words, I was seized with a sudden trembling: my pulse beat with emotion, and fixing my eyes upon her---"Is it possible," said I; "how did you lose this child?"

* This Song, set to Music, may be had of G. WALKER, Music seller, 106, *Great Portland-street*, price 1s.

“It was stolen from me in infancy, and no trace remained, or has ever arisen, that could lead to its recovery.”

“O heavens!” exclaimed I, almost overcome with the ardency of hope---“how long---” I could not pronounce the rest of the sentence from the eagerness of expectation: but my overstretched hopes were sunk at once---I turned pale, and extreme sickness came over me, when the Marquesa mournfully replied, “that it was more than fifteen years, since her daughter had been lost.”

“Your daughter,” said I, faintly, “I thought---” but checking myself, I had some difficulty to recover the shock of so great a disappointment.

“Holy virgin,” said the Marquesa, “you look extremely ill---what can have affected you thus?”

“I am fatigued,” replied I. “This musician has the power of melting the heart, and calling up all the griefs we have ever suffered.”

Christiana

Christiana turned her eyes on me with a look that was inexpressibly penetrating, and seemed as if she read by intuition all the emotions of my soul.

“Let us retire,” said I, rising; “the evening air becomes cold, and will do us harm after so warm a day. To-morrow we will inquire the history of the youth.”

I passed a very unpleasant night, my high, though suddenly raised hopes having been as quickly crushed. In the morning I arose early, and inquiring for the musician who had so strongly interested us, I learned that he was already gone, having taken a road very contrary to our’s. I felt some regret at his unexpected departure; his music, his person, and manner of life having much interested me in his favour. We left this pleasant village early in the day, and found in the humours of Nugnez much relief from the different thoughts which saddened each of our countenances.

About fourteen days after this event, we arrived within sight of Leon, having twice in our journey been obliged to rest for a day or more, to refresh ourselves and our mules. The first sight of Leon, and the mountains, which at a little distance reared their dark summits in confusion to the clouds, gave a flush of joy mingled with apprehension, to my spirits. I fixed my eyes upon the well known hills, behind which lay the valley of St. Helma.

“Ah, Cornelia!” said I, internally. “Do you still reside beneath the shades of the forest---do you still remain beneath the mouldering roof of that ruined and gloomy castle? Is the severe Don Raphael yet alive, or has he expired, and left you to all the perils of your exposed situation?--- soon shall I know. Soon shall I learn what is your fate. But O heavens! should I find the castle empty, and Cornelia gone!” The supposition made me start with a pang of terror, and the ladies reproached me with my absence of mind,
having

having several times spoken to me without receiving any answer.

“One would suppose, Lorenzo,” said the Marquesa, “you had a mistress in Leon, and that you did not expect a favorable reception.”

“You mistake,” said I, very seriously; “there is no lady within the walls of Leon who will acknowledge that title.”

“But if not within, Cavalier,” said Nugnez, “there may be without the walls, and all I can say is, you are not much of a soldier if you delay the siege till the fort is relieved.”

I smiled without reply, and a slight blush tinged the cheeks of ~~Christiana~~ who readily understood the insinuation of Nugnez, which was made with a look of expression towards her.

At a little village within half a league of Leon, Nugnez desired us to halt; turning a few yards down a green lane, both sides of which were covered with trees, whose

branches united at the top, forming a cool and beautiful retreat.

“ You must acknowledge,” said Nugnez, “ that I have performed my promise, and brought you safe to the gates of Leon. I should have done the same if all the army had been at our heels. I advise you to delay entering the city till the evening, but you must excuse my further attendance. Now that I have fulfilled my engagement, there remains only your part to perform. If it is not convenient to you on the spot, appoint any place in Leon where I shall meet you to-morrow night ; but I should be better pleased not to enter the walls.

“ It is with regret,” replied I, “ that I part from one who has obliged us with so many good offices, and the more so as I cannot prevail on you to become a regular member of society. I was in hopes that you might have imbibed, in our company, a taste for more refined manners and conversation than that of your late companions ;

nions; but I perceive that habit is more powerful than reason. I shall not in any degree willingly be the means of your detention; let us, however, now sit down in this pleasant situation, and share the stores we have left, over which we will settle our account."

I delivered to him the exact sum for which we had agreed. The Marquesa, as we had pre-concerted, gave him a ring of more than equal value, which he received with many expressions of gratitude.

"I have now only to let you into a little secret before I go," said he, "which is, that I have known you ladies all along. The Marquis de Mirandula is by this time safe in France. I met with him by chance the very night of his flight, and was the means of directing him to his secretary, Vasco, who was flying after the battle, and knew not of the escape of the Marquis."

"Why," cried the Marquesa, with a flush of joy, "did you not mention this
 II 2 before ?

before?---How could you retain such a secret for so many days?"

"To shew you that I am not one who tells all he knows; and beside, lady, I thought you would not trust me with so much confidence lest I might betray you."

The Marquesa could not appear displeased with this curious specimen of fidelity, contenting herself with making every possible inquiry, but without learning any thing more satisfactory.

I inquired what route he intended to pursue when he quitted us. He replied that he had not yet determined, but that if he came across that traitor, Filelfo, he should wipe out all the debts between them.

I did not attempt to check this spirit of revenge, and after a little more conversation, he arose, and concealing the money in a secret cavity of his saddle, he mounted and rode off at full trot.

Left wholly to ourselves, for the first time since our quitting the house of the
Marquis

Marquis, we entered into a more particular arrangement of our affairs. Christiana, never easy in her masculine dress, determined on resuming her own, immediately after our establishment at Leon, and as I must of necessity be frequently in their company, I proposed that I should pass for a son and a brother.

This project necessarily led the Marquesa to inquire if my own parents were not living, and in what part of Spain they resided? I evaded this question, by observing that my family was of so remote a part of Spain, that no one of Leon would discover our design. The Marquesa did not appear perfectly satisfied with my reply ; there was something in her manner, which shewed that she was not ; but being unwilling to lay hold on my evident confusion, she consented to the plan, with one or two modifications.

We waited till towards evening before we entered the city of Leon, where leaving the ladies at an inn, that they might there

change their dress, I went out to gain information and procure a lodging. I went immediately to the house where I had formerly resided, which I found was now without any other inhabitant than the widow who kept it. I related to her briefly, that I had necessity for two suits of rooms, and hinting that I had particular reasons for secrecy, requested she would inform no one that my mother and sister were beneath her roof; declaring I should immediately depart if she betrayed her trust, as it would expose us to the persecution of a Nobleman, who was in love with my sister.

She protested to me that she was incapable of betraying us, and that we should find she knew the value of our confidence.

Having settled with dame Sporza the terms of our accommodation, I hastened to bring the ladies to a place where they might at length remain in peace, and I hoped with as much secrecy and security, as within the walls of a convent; the house
being

being situated in an obscure street, and the chambers running backwards towards the gardens.

The Marquesa and Christiana received the account of my success with much pleasure, delaying no time in taking possession of their apartments, where I left them to make their own arrangements.

No one had inhabited my chamber since my departure from Leon, and I could almost have believed the furniture had never been removed from its place. There is something like affection in the human mind towards places and things with which we have long been familiar, and it was with pleasure I remembered everything, and looked from my little window into a dark and desolate street.

I sat down in an antique chair, regarding every object with pleasure ; but these trifles, however pleasing, had not power to detain me from matters of greater moment. It was a subject of important consideration, that I was become responsible

for the safety of two ladies, who were in fact as much a tie upon my actions, as if they had been a family of my own, and I was at as little liberty to leave them.

The jewels and trinkets of value, which I had received from the Marquis, I considered as their property, which honor obliged me to dedicate to their service; and my pride was alarmed, when I perceived, that in fact I was become a pensioner upon them. I knew not whether I should receive my pay from the army, and particularly in the present deranged state of public finances. My thoughts became gloomy at these reflections; it seemed utterly impossible that I could ever ask the hand of Cornelia, and provide her common subsistence; even if she should venture to disobey the implacable commands of Don Raphael. "But how do I know," cried I, rising and pacing the room; "How do I know that he yet lives, or whether he languishes under the effects of that fatal wound. Ah, if he is dead, and Cornelia
left

left deserted and alone ; with what pleasure should I bring her into society, and place her beneath the maternal care of the Marquesa, in the company of the tender and amiable Christiana !-----But no ! --how cruel is my fortune, and even more cruel should I be myself, were I to introduce this dear mistress of my heart, into the company of the too susceptible Christiana.--- Good heavens ! what is my situation ? Involved as I am, in a labyrinth of opposite and irreconcilable difficulties. Unfortunate from the first hour I drew breath, a dependent on an unknown bounty ; a soldier without pay ; wanting almost the common means of existence ! Who can advise me ? To whom shall I look for assistance ?”

Thus I continued to lament my fortune, till the lateness of the hour invited me to bed, when my sleep was disturbed by harassing dreams, and I repeatedly awoke in sudden fright.

In the morning I hastened, before the ladies were visible, to procure information

from the army, and learn the present situation of my own troops. I must confess, I was ashamed to be thus absent in time of danger, but hitherto it had not been possible for me to act otherwise. I learned with no little surprize, that after the flight of the insurgents, they had rallied with considerable force, and in turn routed the royalists in repeated actions. So fickle is the fortune of war, that no party ought to exult in victory, or be dejected on defeat, till the final terms of peace are ratified.

The army agent at Leon had received an account of my death, after I had been deserted at the inn; and I learnt with no little vexation, that my name had been erased, and my command given to another.

I expressed my surprize at this hasty proceeding, requesting the agent to write, as I should myself do, both to Count Pandolfo, and the Duke.

“Most willingly,” replied he, bowing profoundly. “You will not, I suppose, think of joining the army, till you shall receive

ceive an answer. You must expect the affair will take some time to arrange, for it will not be very pleasant to dismiss an able officer from his situation, till another shall be found. You may, however, rely on my exertions in your favour, as much as if it were for myself; and need not take any trouble, as it will go through my hands in the common routine of business."

I returned this gentleman thanks, being very well satisfied to trust to his promises, not knowing that he had at that very time received a present from my successor, to hasten his commission, so that in place of writing in my favour he wrote to his friend to be on his guard, till he was confirmed in the rank.

Meanwhile, I was the dupe of his promises, being very well satisfied with the leisure they allowed me to attend to other concerns, with which I was much more interested. I made no secret of my return to Leon, that the Marquis might learn my residence from the public report, and my
time

time was very agreeably spent in the private society of the Marquesa and her daughter.

One unforeseen delay followed another; to prevent my executing the intention I had so much at heart, of visiting the valley of St. Helma; and when I had made every necessary arrangement for some days absence, my journey was suspended by the sudden illness of the Marquesa, who was attacked by so violent a fever, that I greatly feared it would terminate fatally, and involve the unfortunate Christiana in greater difficulties, with which she was no way qualified to struggle.

This new and terrible cause of grief, seized upon her spirits, and reduced her to so much weakness, that it was with difficulty she performed those little offices, sickness cannot dispense with.

I endeavoured to inspire her with brighter hopes, but when the heart is sick and the spirits faint, even hope loses its power to charm, and foreboding melancholy

choly leads to the most sinister conclusions.

It was impossible under these circumstances, I could move from my station, every moment being employed in attendance on the Marquesa, or in consoling her daughter, who seemed to cast herself upon my protection, and to languish in my absence.

It was with sorrow, that I saw this deep and incurable passion mingle in every action she performed towards me, and which the honor I had pledged to the Marquis, would have prevented my returning, had not my heart been engaged to another. Yet, notwithstanding the engagement formed by preference, and endeared by time, it was impossible to behold the touching and distressing melancholy, which had seized the inimitable features of this charming lady, without feeling: and if the sacrifice of my life could have procured her happiness, I would willingly have parted with a bauble I had so little reason to prize.

I frequently

I frequently attempted, by indirect intimation, to hint the folly of a woman's placing her affection on an object, which might not, when known, be found worthy of esteem ; but she answered me only with a sigh, and a timid glance, which spoke more than sentiment could utter.

The attention required by the Marquesa, brought us often together in her presence, and we have passed whole hours near the bed-side of that amiable lady, without interchanging a word.

I lamented the impossibility of informing the Marquis de Mirandula of the danger of his lady, of whom the physician, who attended her, had very little hopes, and I looked forward with apprehension to the hour, when I should be left sole guardian to Donna Christiana.

For near a month the Marquesa lingered upon the bed of death, visibly wasting into shadow, and hastening to that state of unknown being, where every conjecture fails in hope. I daily and hourly
looked

looked forward to this fatal event, scarce venturing out on the most important business, lest I might find her no longer living at my return. When the day broke in the morning, I expected that she would not breath at its close; and when the night came, I could not hope she would again open her eyes on the morrow.

The fallacy of human hope is never more evident, than near the bed of sickness; we catch with ardour at the smallest amendment, and are sunk in despair at a contrary symptom. Our spirits had been considerably raised by the apparent cheerfulness of the Marquesa, and having scarce rested for many days, I retired to my chamber to seek a few hours repose. About midnight, I was suddenly roused by the calls of dame Sporza, who begged me instantly to descend, if I ever wished to see the Lady Sempronia alive.

I hurried half dressed, and in the utmost confusion, to the room where she lay, too feeble to give utterance to speech, but her
eyes

eyes yet distinguished objects, and her senses were unshaken. She smiled, when I drew near the bed, almost choaked with unutterable grief. Her daughter, the silent picture of dying misery, sat beside her with one hand in her's.

The Marquesa beckoned me to draw near, holding out her other hand to me, which was already damp and chill. She gazed upon me, and then regarding her daughter with a look of tenderness, she drew her hands together, giving that of Christiana to me, then closing her eyes, she seemed sinking under the effort she had made.

The soul of Christiana was too severely touched by this unexpected action. She lifted her fine eyes for a moment upon me, and closing them, sunk senseless upon the bed of her mother, who, with a faint sigh, that instant expired.

I took Christiana in my arms, and wept over her like a child. My whole soul seemed ready to forsake its habitation, and my senses were bewildered with grief. I
gazed

gazed upon her lovely features in silence, and she seemed a thousand times more dear to me than ever, and for some time even Cornelia was forgot. I knew not how long I remained in this situation, nor when I should have shaken off that stupor, which attends excess of misfortune, had not returning symptoms of life in Christiana, reminded me of the part I had to perform.

I judged it best that Christiana should be ignorant of her mother's death till the morning, and carrying her into the next room, I desired dame Sporza to attend her, till she could leave her with safety ; while the nurse should remain by the body of the Marquesa. The little box which this unfortunate lady had preserved in her flight, and which I believed might contain papers of consequence, I took to my own chamber, and placing it beside my lamp upon a table, I gave way to exclamations, and the bitterest grief.

I threw

I threw myself, half dressed as I was, upon the bed, where I remained till the clock struck two. I was astonished at the tardiness of time, for in my apprehension, it was near morning. Sleep was entirely departed from my eyes. I arose, and looking out, the streets of Leon were desolate and dark, not a footstep trod upon the hollow ground; nor did any star shed a ray of light through the gloom.

I took a chair, and began to turn over the contents of the box, intending to take an inventory of the trinkets, and see if there were no papers that might be some guide to my actions. I found a packet of letters, which appeared to have been written by the Marquis, at different times, and many of them on the tenderest subjects; but I had no inclination to enter on the perusal of what was so foreign to the solemnity which hung around me. Three or four folded papers lay at the bottom, tied with a black ribbon, and on the outside they were directed to the Marquesa, in a different

different hand from the first parcel, and by the name, which was this lady's prior to her marriage; I immediatly supposed them to have been sent by some unfortunate candidate for her affections.

At another time I should have examined these letters with curiosity and attention, but now I regarded them with indifference. "Alas," said I, "such is the circle of human affairs; such is the transactions of our passage through life. To-day we are distracted with passion for an object, upon which we centre every wish and every desire. A few days, a few months, a few years, swiftly fly; but not a year, not a month, not a day, passes without some change in this object of our affection. Before we have well considered that we have equally changed, death has already laid his hand upon us, and the beauty of youth is departed for ever. How important, perhaps, were those letters at the time they were written; but of what consequence to any one is the history
of

of former years? The present, which we never enjoy, is all that we know, and all of which we are certain !

I lifted up the last parcel, with intention to replace them, and a very elegant little portrait slipped from them, tied with black. This circumstance aroused some little curiosity, and holding it nearer the lamp, I started with surprize, at beholding the features of a man, whom no one had ever seen once, and forgotten.

Is it possible, thought I, that Don Raphael was ever in love with Lady Sempronia? What must have been the disappointment of a man, whose every passion seems fire, and who knows not how to suffer controul? No wonder that a man like him, who disdains the smallest check upon his actions, should feel the violence of so severe a loss. I wonder that his rage did not involve in its effects, the destruction of its object. But can he, could he have ever known the genuine influence of love, and deliberately doom his daughter to
forego

forego any, and every object she might chance to choose, and bar her from all affection? It would not be Don Raphael if he acted like the rest of mankind.

On the reverse of this portrait, were several initial letters, which I could not explain, having no relation to the name of Don Raphael, and I concluded they might have some secret allusion, known only to the object of his passion. Laying aside the portrait, I again took up the letters, which had now assumed a very different value, and soon interested me.

They were written with a feeling that at times approached nearly to raving, and again expressed such exquisite tenderness and despair, that tears flowed from my eyes as I read. He complained of the preference she gave the Marquis de Mirandula, in language which I should have thought irresistible, and which no heart unpossessed could have withstood. Sometimes he hinted the superiority of his birth and fortune above his rival, and sometimes

her

he insinuated that he could never behold her in the arms of another, and endure existence. But the last letter, evidently sent after her marriage, was dictated with many marks of insanity. By turns he employed every gentle name he could fix upon her, or execrated her as the bane of his existence. He menaced her with his eternal hatred, and concluded with the most ardent prayers for her happiness. Such had been this imperious man beneath the influence of love:---He, who to the sighs of another was as obdurate as marble, was capable of the deepest and most violent despair.

But however the portrait assured me that it must have been Don Raphael who had written these letters, the initials upon it coinciding with the signature, yet it was impossible for me to discover from them the real name and rank of their author.

After reading these letters several times, I took up those belonging to the Marquis, which, like the others, had been written in
the

the days of courtship, and, probably, reserved by the Marquesa as memorials of her youth and the power of her charms.

How different was the language of these letters from those of Don Raphael; the most patient and constant attachment was marked in words of equal tenderness and respect;---The most delicate turns, and the most insinuating wit, ran through every line; and the preference which a woman of understanding and wit would give, was quickly decided in favour of the Marquis.

The morning found me engaged over these papers, which I considered very ill suited to meet the eye of Christiana, whose heart was already too deeply engaged for her tranquillity:---To preserve them for the Marquis was as little eligible, and to keep them myself, I knew not whether honor permitted. I reflected that Christiana must be acquainted with the contents of this little box, though she might not have perused the papers; and that upon the whole, these papers had better be committed to her discretion.

The reading of these letters, and my reflections upon them, had in part suspended the torrent of grief which at first overcame me, and enabled me to think with some degree of calmness upon the engagement I had before me.

The last action of the Marquesa seemed an avowal of her daughter's sentiments, and a claim upon me to return them; but I could neither receive them, nor speak upon the subject. I foresaw how impossible it would be that we should remain in the same house, and though she passed under the name of my sister, yet decorum scarcely permitted so much intercourse as would then be unavoidable. In a convent she would find every attention, and if admitted under a fictitious name, would avoid any danger from the enemies of her house.

It was a severe task to hint the necessity of such a measure, but I saw no other way by which her peace might be restored. The trinkets in my possession, with those of her mother, would amply provide for
her,

her, even if her father should fall a sacrifice to his ill fortune ; and unpleasant as was the necessity of representing these facts to her, I resolved upon the measure, when I should have performed the last offices of friendship to her deceased parent. I confess that I appeared cruel in my own eyes. I could have wished that Cornelia had not been so dear to me ; but I had not resolution to forego the one for the other.

CHAP. V.

ABOUT six in the morning, I descended with the intention of taking a walk in the air, to try if its freshness would dissipate a severe head-ache, which want of rest had occasioned. I went into the street, which was yet without any passengers, but some devotees going to morning prayers. Those who have never experienced, can never know the singular sensations of the human mind, when it has but just quitted the bed of death, and filled with thoughts of mortal insignificance, walks out amongst the little elevations which men inhabit, and which compose a city. We see every object with a melancholy and indifferent regard; our thoughts

thoughts are wandering to other worlds, while our bodies seem of little consequence in this; and we move on, careless of the observations and opinions of those around us.

There was something solemnly pleasing in this state of mind, and it was with pain my thoughts were interrupted, by a grave man, of little stature, who inquired of me the way to the street in which I lodged. I passed him without reply, being unwilling to dissolve the illusion which wrapt me in its images; but repeating his question, and planting himself in my way, he obliged me to stop and answer him.

While I was giving him directions (for I had insensibly walked to a considerable distance) he eyed me with particular attention. He apologized for the trouble he had given me, and observing that he was a stranger in Leon, inquired farther, if I knew any of the people residing in that street.

“I live there myself,” answered I.

Again he looked earnestly upon me, and standing a moment as if considering something of importance; “You live there you say? Can you inform me of a person of the name of Lorenzo de Ferrara?”

In my turn I gazed upon this stranger, but not reading in his countenance any embarrassment, which might have excited my suspicion, I replied, “If you have any business with Lorenzo, I am his most intimate friend, and will either carry your message, or lead you to himself.”

“My business is a mere trifle;” answered he, smiling; “it is only to inquire concerning a vacancy now in the army:--- I will follow you to him if agreeable.”

I endeavoured to draw from him, during our walk, what was the real object of his mission; what he had assigned being, obviously, only a pretence; but he was impenetrable to my questions, smiling at my expectation of discovering more than he intended.

I knocked

I knocked at the door, and dame Sporza opened it, saying, as soon as we reached the first room, "Indeed, Cavalier Lorenzo, you need not have been in so much haste with the funeral of your mother, for poor Donna Christiana, I fear, will very soon follow her---she is extremely ill indeed."

"Is the Marquesa dead?" cried the stranger, turning pale; "what fatal calamity is this which has happened?"

"It is, indeed, too true," said I. "The Marquesa expired but a few hours since: we will talk on this doleful subject when you have delivered your business to Lorenzo, whom I need not now inform you, stands before you." He looked at dame Sporza, as much as to require her absence: but conducting him to my own chamber, I begged him to be seated, and to inform me of his mission.

"My name," said he, "is Vasco. I am the secretary and confidant of the Marquis de Mirandula. I have brought letters for you, for the Marquesa, and for Donna

Christiana ; but what wretched tidings shall I have to carry back !---Will fortune never be weary of persecuting the virtuous ?”

I inquired where the Marquis had found an asylum ; and by what means he had so soon gained intelligence of my residence. He replied that it was with extreme danger, and under various disguises, that he had escaped from Spain ; that he had found it impossible to enter France, through the cordon of troops which were stationed to cut off any communication with that country ; that adopting the habit of a blind beggar, attended by Vasco, whose dark features easily passed for the gipsey breed, they had kept along the feet of the Pyrenean hills, till they arrived at St. Sebastian, on the coast of Biscay. There they were recognized inquiring for a vessel to go to France, and would certainly have been taken, had they not most opportunely met with Nugnez, the smuggler, who informed them of their danger, and advised them

them immediately to put themselves on board a little vessel they had in a private creek, bound for Ferrol.

They had scarcely time to reach the bark, before their pursuers came in sight, expressing on the shore their anger at this escape, and firing their carbines without any hope of execution. From Nugnez they learned the safety of our party; and having been beaten about for a fortnight, by contrary winds, they put in at the first creek on the Portuguese coast, where they could land in safety; from thence the Marquis and Vasco set out for Villa Franca, within a few miles of the frontiers, whence the latter had ventured with dispatches from his master, and now delivered them into my hand.

Had he been only one day earlier, the Marquesa would have been living; and the certainty of her husband's safety might have given a favourable turn to her distemper. I hastily opened the Marquis's letter to myself: it was written with kindness,

recommending his interests to my further care, till such time as he should be settled enough to take the charge from my hands. He requested me to send him, through the hands of Vasco, those papers he had delivered to me on the night of our flight, and concluded with inviting me to join him in Portugal, where he would procure me a superior command under the Duke of Briganza.

I expressed my displeasure in plain terms to Vasco, at this overture against my loyalty. "What," said I, "does the Marquis take me for? It seems he considers me a raw boy, who may be fired with the sophisms of disaffection, and ignorant of the genuine appellations of patriot, since he considers no man a patriot, but who would oppose the present establishment, right or wrong. Does patriotism consist in wishing success to a sworn enemy? No, let the measures of government be ever so oppressive, there are other means of redress, than inviting, aiding, and assisting an
 enemy,

enemy, who in one week would do more mischief, than the despotism of power in a century."

My connection with the Marquis had nothing in common with politics, and I determined in my answer to be wholly silent on the subject; indeed I had sufficient matter to employ my pen. I proposed to Vasco that he should witness the interment of the Marquesa, whom it would not be possible for the present, or at least prudent, to convey to the tombs of her ancestors.

The danger which attended Vasco, whose person was almost as well known as that of his master, determined me to receive him for some days into my lodging, and I debated with him the particulars of the solemn ceremony, which remained for me to perform.

It was with some difficulty, and not without the assistance of dame Sporza, we arranged our schemes; for as the Marquesa was to be interred under the name of

my mother, it might be difficult to claim her, when tranquillity might allow her removal. This good woman proposed to ask leave of the superior of a convent, who was her relation, to admit the body into the vault of their church, as that of a lady, who, in passing through the city, had been suddenly taken ill and died; and might be claimed by her relations, who resided at a distant part of Spain, when they should learn her fate.

I gave dame Sporza a small sum to undertake and defray little expences; and this arrangement being finished, all my care turned upon Christiana, whose spirits were so low, and her frame so weak, that I feared the slightest agitation might overcome her.

I disclosed to her with caution, the tidings I had received of her father's safety, and finding she listened to it with calmness, I delivered his letter into her hand. On the fourth day after the decease of the Marquesa, I followed her, in company with
Vasco,

Vasco, to the vaults of the dead, Christiana being too ill to partake in this solemn ceremony. It was the first time I had ever followed a friend to the grave, and my mind was too much affected to permit me to examine this sanctuary of mouldering mortality, through which the flashing tapers shed a dreary flame.

To defray these expences, and bestow a present upon the convent, where several masses were celebrated for the repose of the deceased ; I was obliged to part with some jewels, keeping an exact account of my disbursements. Vasco had remained with me during his stay in Leon, but now the tragical scene being closed, he proposed to depart, having used the subtilty of his art in vain, to draw me over to the cause of rebellion. He was under the necessity of using much caution at his departure, being apprehensive that he should be known.

After Vasco had left us, our family returned to something like tranquillity,
though

though a settled melancholy fixed itself upon Christiana ; and our discourses frequently turned upon the merits of a life, spent within the walls of a convent. It was impossible not to perceive the meaning, couched beneath these discourses, which she was the first to promote.

“ Since,” said she, “ life has no charms for me, I begin to feel an inclination to pass my days within the walls of a convent, where the contentions and strivings of society will be excluded from my sight ; and where, if I am not happy, I shall at least learn resignation to the destiny of providence.”

So much sweet and modest eloquence flowed from her tongue, while her angel countenance seemed illumined with more than mortal expression, that I was frequently obliged abruptly to fly her presence, lest my tongue should have betrayed the purpose of my heart ; and I should have uttered vows that cooler reason could not have fulfilled.

Some

114 Some weeks passed away, without any news from the Marquis, and I began to entertain fears of his situation, or the safety of Vasco.

I had repeatedly solicited the agent, for my own finances were exhausted, and my pay suspended, but he never wanted means of delay, and my disposition did not once suspect or penetrate his design.

In this interval, I determined no longer to delay my journey to the castle of St. Helma. I informed Christiana, that some little business of material importance to myself, would require my absence for a few days. At the same time I delivered to her the box, containing her mother's letters, which I had deferred till now, when the keen edge of her sorrow was a little blunted. The portrait of Don Raphael, whom she had never heard named, she most willingly gave me, and bidding me remember, that while I should be absent, she remained without a protector and without a friend ; she hastened to her own chamber,

that

that she might conceal the tears which swelled to her eye.

It was early in the morning that I departed from Leon, well mounted on an Andalusian courser, which I had hired for the purpose; and the day being beautiful, a few hours brought me to the foot of the mountains.

My hopes and fears ultimately bore sway, as I drew near the eventful, though secluded valley; and it was with pleasure, I lingered to examine objects that recalled so many pleasing thoughts, while I almost feared my approach to the castle, lest I might be only going to plunge myself into a new series of difficulties. It is in vain we reason with fate, and those who think themselves only guided by reason, are impelled by irresistible circumstances.

Since the time I had first rambled from the fort of Dajos, and lingered on the mountains till the shades of night hung around me, when I was struck with more than common astonishment at the phantom

tom or shadow of unknown existence which passed by me, I had never experienced any incident of supernatural appearance ; nor did the many tales, I had at times listened to, touch my mind with those common superstitions my education at Toledo had helped me to overcome. But, however we may condemn the errors of the vulgar, and smile at the spirits said to dwell in dreary shades, and moss-grown ruins, yet we must acknowledge, that we know little of the economy of nature ; and from our inability to account for many accidents which daily arise, can only refer them to unseen causes ; and, without the hazard of superstition, may allow that intervention of singular and undefinable natures, have happened at various times to man.

In this belief I am confirmed, by an incident, I myself experienced in the forest of St. Helma, as well as by that tremendous phenomenon, which I have just mentioned.

The fervent heat of noon blazed upon the mountains, and obscured the azure of
the

the sky with vapour, giving to the distant country an appearance of being involved in smoke. When I entered the pleasant shades of the valley, the birds had ceased to chirp amongst the boughs, and every wind of the heavens was still. The waters of the river seemed to have suspended their murmurs, that they might listen to the silence, and fancy might have concluded, that such was the pause before animal existence was awakened into being. It appeared a species of sacrilege to interrupt the tranquillity of the groves, and wrapped in reflections on the reception I might hope to meet from Don Raphael and his daughter, if they yet remained ; I moved slowly towards the castle. A voice behind me, pronounced the name of *Lorenzo* ! in a tone so clear and distinct, that I turned instantly round, with a start of surprize, but no person was visible---and what person could have followed me ?

I paused for a moment, confounded at so mysterious an incident ; but willing to
 think

think that my fancy had deceived my understanding, I turned about, and began to pursue my way. The sound of a quick footstep behind me, caused me again to look round, and a trembling crept over my nerves, when I could perceive no sign of any person near me. All now again was hushed into the profoundest silence, and again the same voice, at a distance before me, clearly pronounced the word *Lorenzo* ! I was filled with fear and uneasiness ; it seemed an omen of some fatal accident. It might be a preparatory warning, or a sign that I should forbear my intentions, and return. But the intervention must have been more evident and more powerful, that could have deterred me from the steady purpose of my heart, at a time too, when I was so near the decision of my doubts.

The impression of this incident upon my spirits, was strong and immovable ; I endeavoured in vain to reason upon the subject ; I no longer beheld with delight any

one

one object around me.---The flowers lost their lustre ; and the verdure of the groves its green ; yet in defiance to these melancholy forebodings, I continued to proceed.

When I gained the thick labyrinth of trees which encompassed the outer walk, and were purposely interwoven with coppice-wood ; I secured my horse in a secret recess, moving myself cautiously into the more open path to make observations. I could not perceive the smallest external change. The tottering ruins still threatened to strew the ground, and the ivy crept over the gates undisturbed. I proceeded wholly round in expectation that the winter's storms might have broken an entrance ; but the strong creeping plants, which clambered the wall, acted as a cement in binding the rough and heavy stones together.

My heart beat while I made this circumvolution, being assured that the place was inhabited, the little door resisting my cautious

cautious attempts to open it. I sat down on a bank of flowers at some distance, to consider by what means I might gain admission. Whether I should wait, as heretofore, till night should wrap all things in obscurity, when I might safely scale the wall; or whether I should, without hesitation, present myself at the gate, and demand admission, to inquire after the health of a man who, notwithstanding the unfortunate accident which took place at my last visit, was under some obligation to my services.

I was not long in determining on the latter, as the most eligible upon several accounts; and while I sat a little time to rest, I enjoyed the pleasure I should receive in surprising Cornelia, who must have considered me as either dead, or inconstant to the professions I had hastily made her.

I was every moment on the point of rising, but my heart as frequently failed me, till the sun had already passed several hours

hours since noon. At length I arose, and cautiously advanced to the little door, which I had gained within a few feet, when I heard the bolts withdrawn on the inside, and fearing thus at once to expose myself to the eyes, and to the anger of the imperious Don Raphael, I started aside behind some tall bushes, which effectually concealed me, and had the satisfaction to see this man, whom I so much feared, pass by. Suspicion marked his steps, and he darted his glances around him with so much jealous precaution, that I feared he would detect me, and I blushed at the meaness of my concealment.

A much greater degree of paleness had taken possession of his gloomy countenance, and his illness had given an expression of anguish to his features. His dress was not so uncouth as I had before seen him wear; and his cloak hanging on one side for the benefit of coolness, I perceived that he was armed with pistols. He seemed, in my eyes, like the lordly tyrant

rant of the forest, trembling at a founding leaf.

I dared not quit my covert till I judged, by the time, and the measure of his pace, that he was at a considerable distance; then stealing with as much precaution as himself had used, I ventured from the shade and approached the door. I had been acquainted with the secret of opening it when not barred within, on the night that I had preserved his life. "What are omens," said I, smiling as I entered; "if they have any value, this is an omen of success." Then closing the door behind me, I secured it with the bolts, and advanced across the weed-covered yard to the door of the castle.

No one who had casually found an entrance, would have supposed these trembling walls contained an inhabitant: the outward bars, half eaten through with rust, would have effectually prevented their curiosity from prying further---these I removed, and entered on the winding passages

sages which led to the furnished part of the building.

The solemn tones of the organ, played with a very low stop, filled my breast with tumultuous emotion, and conducted my steps without error. I feared to present myself at once, lest the surprize should produce unpleasant circumstances; yet fearing the sudden return of Don Raphael, I had no time to delay, and opening the door, I stood at once before the object of my affections.

She started up from the instrument, alternately colouring and turning pale; then again she sat down, and without speaking, fixed her eyes upon me.

“My dearest Cornelia,” said I, “be not alarmed at my abrupt entrance; I had no means of preparing you for a visit, which I hope is not unwelcome.”

Tears gathered in her eyes as I spoke, and she gave way to them so much that she perfectly sobbed. I could have borne her company, but checking so much weakness,

I took

I took her passive hand, and pressed it to my lips.

“Tell me, dear Cornelia,” said I, “whence flow these tears? are they from a remembrance of the past; or is your heart full to overflowing?” She wiped the tears from her eyes, and turning them upon me, soft as violets dipped in a shower;--- “Do I indeed,” said she, “behold you? Is it in very truth Lorenzo that I see? How many days, and how many months have gone since I last saw you!---Indeed I thought that you were dead, or had ceased to remember me.”

“Impossible,” said I, pressing her hand; “I must forget myself before I forget you. You, dear Cornelia, who have been the constant object of my thoughts, and whose image has ever stood before my eyes.-- Tell me, my angel, for we have no time to lose; by what providence did your father survive the mischance of my hand, and the wounds he had before received?”

“Don

“Don Raphael,” replied she, “lay for a long time ill, but the powerful cordials he possessed, and the strength of his constitution, so long deprived of the luxuries of polished life, in time recovered him. He is now perfectly well, and more severe than ever; but do you know, Lorenzo, I have a secret to tell you.”

“And what is that?” said I smiling.

“Don Raphael intends to marry me! Is it not ridiculous?” cried she, laughing.

“Good God!” exclaimed I in the utmost astonishment. “Don Raphael marry you! you, Cornelia?---what an infamous and infernal project. Do you know that it is impious in extreme?”

“Whatever it may be,” said she, lightly, “You need not be in a passion; I have told him I would not have him, even if he was my father!”

I started up in perfect amazement; what, thought I, is this beautiful creature an idiot after all.---“Heavens!” cried I,
half

half distracted; "you speak strangely, Cornelia;---What is it you mean?"

"Have I not told you, then?" said she. "I was so overjoyed to see you, that I forgot: but I have discovered that this odious Don Raphael is no more my father than he is your's.---You need not stare so, for it is as true as that he wants to marry me; but I told him I thought you a thousand times more handsome, and he has been ill-natured and gloomy ever since."

"Heavens, Cornelia," said I, again sitting down, "you confound me with your words; If Don Raphael is not your father, what is he?"

"A tyrant!" cried she with indignation.

"Has he told you all this himself?" said I, beginning to suspect Don Raphael of playing upon her ignorance.

"No, no;" replied she, "he kept the secret locked up in that large iron chest you might have seen in his room. If you will have a little patience, I will tell you all about it."

“You will oblige me,” replied I, “I will be attentive.”

“To begin then,” said she: “It was not his intention I should ever learn this important secret, till after his death, which he has kept for so many years in profound silence. It was one night when he was so much overcome with his fever, and had no expectation he should survive, that he made me sit down by his bed, and at intervals gave me instructions about many things I was to do, immediately on his death. Amongst others, he gave me the key of an iron chest, which always remained in that chamber, which is so strongly guarded; he informed me, that within it I should find a large sum in specie, and some papers of the utmost consequence to myself, with directions I must religiously obey. He so much exhausted himself by talking, that he fell into so deep a sleep, that while I watched the glimmering lamp I could not hear him breathe, and concluded he was dead. I cannot

cannot describe to you the singularity of my feelings at this idea, so altogether new to me, and which I had never witnessed, but in that of expiring birds; and I felt shocked at the thought that he would never speak to me any more.

“But this reflection gave way by degrees, to the recollection of what he had commanded me immediately to do, upon his decease; and leaving the side of the bed, I opened the iron chest with the key he had given me. The papers lay in a little division, on the top of several bags of money--they were my principal object; and taking out the uppermost parcel, I hastened to the lamp, which burnt very faintly, throwing a trembling light into the room. I broke the seal of a letter, directed to myself in the writing of Don Raphael, and my eyes were immediately rivetted upon the first sentence, which filled me with astonishment. It was thus: ‘*Cornelia, my beloved girl, I have educated you in ignorance of your real birth: You are not my*

K 2

daughter,

daughter, though beloved with equal tenderness. Your parents are -----' At these words, a deep groan from Don Raphael threw me into the utmost confusion. I knew not what was going to follow, and trembling as much as if I had been guilty of a capital crime---I hastily replaced the papers, and closed the chest."

"But why," cried I, "did not you retain a paper of such infinite consequence to yourself?"

"I know not," replied she, "I was so much astonished at this discovery, and the return of Don Raphael to life, that I knew not what I did. I turned round at his call, for I believe the noise of closing and locking the chest had aroused him.

'Come hither, Cornelia,' said he in a faint voice, "bring me the keys I gave you.'

"I returned them with so much confusion, that he remarked my agitation, and demanded of me if I had opened the chest.

"I had

"I had ever been taught to answer but with truth, and replied that I had.

'You have,' replied he, gnashing his teeth with as much fury as his enfeebled state would suffer.---'You have read the papers too, I suppose.'

"Yes," replied I, "I have read that I am *not* your daughter."

'You have then discovered this fatal secret,' said he, with a look of bitterness. 'Whose daughter are you, if you are not mine?'

"That," answered I, "I had not sufficient time to read.

'Then you know not whose daughter you are," said he, closing his eyes firmly for a moment, then opening them, he gazed round him with a wild look; 'if you do not know, you never shall---bring hither the lamp to the side of the bed, and put some more oil in it.'

"I did as he commanded me, for I had no idea of refusing any thing he ordered.

'It was my fault, Cornelia, that this

has happened,' said he, in a voice more gentle. 'I should have remembered the curiosity inherent in your existence.---Here, take this key again, and bring me hither the papers you saw.---Now, now,' continued he, 'take that first, the seal of which you have broken.---It contains the secret of your birth---burn it in the flame of the lamp.'

"He tore it in several pieces, and my disappointment was extreme, for I had flattered myself he meant me to read it. I was obliged to obey; and not only this, but many other papers he commanded me to consume, and scatter the ashes on the floor.

"When I had made an end of this tormenting employment---'Now,' said he, with a smile, which I thought, made him more hideous than I had ever seen him, 'we are safe. What you have now destroyed was the history of your birth, and of my life: there remains now only one thing to perform---go to the chest, and

and bring hither a little bundle that you will find.'

"I did as he ordered me; unrolling the dress of a little child, which was made of rich stuffs, and highly ornamented---

'You looked very pretty, Cornelia,' said he, 'when you wore that dress---it is almost a pity to burn it.'

"Surely you would not burn this," said I, breaking into tears, "it cannot tell me to whom I belong; and now that I know you are not my father it can be of no consequence to you: and here is a little chased box you cannot burn.

'Shew me that,' said he.

"He opened the lid, and immediately closing it and sighing deeply, he bade me, in a voice much altered, to tie them all up together again, and put them into the chest.

'I will explain all these things to you when I get well. At present you, no doubt, think me mad. I have been once mad, Cornelia, but time has recovered me.'

“I would willingly have retained this little box, but he watched me so closely, that I had not even an opportunity of looking at the contents. Nor did I know, till long after his recovery, that it contained the picture of my mother.

“This was all the information he condescended to give me, commanding me never again to hint at the actions of that night.

“His manners towards me were now very much changed, and he persecuted me with speeches and addresses I should not have understood, but from your former words. I confess that he seeks to oblige me in all things but in allowing me liberty. He will not permit me to set foot in the forest, nor to visit my little arbour, where I used to take so much pleasure: and if he intended me utterly to hate him, he could not take more effectual means. He will not suffer me to mention your name before him, which only makes me think more about you; and when he
 sighs,

fighs, and tells me that he adores me to distraction, I tell him he is not half so handsome, nor so elegantly dressed as you. He has, it is true, changed his dress to something more agreeable, but still he is so serious, so pompous, and so---I do not know what, that I cannot bear him."

"Your words, Cornelia," said I, "have planted daggers in my heart, but they have rendered you dearer to me than ever. How dangerous is your situation in this dreary place? You have here no protector but this man, whose ways, and whose actions are wholly different from those of other men, and even approach to insanity. What sort of passion can he be inspired with, who has numbered twice your days, and does he know so little of the human heart as to expect success from severity? How more than cruel was the action of forcing you to destroy, with your own hand, the testimonies of your birth? and what confidence can he expect, who locks up from you the tokens of your family

and name? Surely you cannot think of remaining here."

"To what purpose should I fly?" said she. "Don Raphael has informed me that all mankind are treacherous, cruel, and selfish. He has told me, that if they flatter it is to deceive; if they smile, it is to betray; and I have found that himself was not exempt from this character."

"Yes," cried I, with emphasis: "He drew his own character, and palmed it upon you as the character of all men. What essential difference has nature made in the minds of women from men? Do you find then that this character attaches to you? if it does not, believe that there may be men equally exempt from deceit."

She smiled, and replied, "You are very warm, Lorenzo; but how do you know that my heart is not deceitful?"

"The failings of the human heart are great," returned I, "but while my Cornelia possesses this amiable frankness, she cannot

cannot deceive.---At what time do you expect the return of Don Raphael?"

"I have no means of guessing," answered she. "He never declares to me the intent of his actions. He goes out and returns without a word."

"Have you courage, Cornelia?" said I, taking each of her hands in mine, and rising. "Dare you hazard your fortune upon mine, and permit me to liberate you from this singular slavery; so singular, that throughout the kingdom of Spain there is certainly no other example? Permit me to lead you into that world of which you have only heard. This is the moment, and perhaps the only moment fate has given, which if suffered to escape, will never again return."

"Most willingly would I trust myself to your protection, if I could depend upon your word," said she, deeply blushing.

"I take all the fairs in heaven to witness," said I, clasping my arm round her, "that I am sincere---that I adore you to frenzy,

frenzy and that neither time nor circumstances can change my constancy."

" 'Tis enough," replied she, "there is my hand---if you deceive me, my heart will never more place confidence in man."

I had been hurried forward to this proposal by unexpected circumstances, and seeing no other way to prevent my losing her for ever, I hastened the trifling preparation that was necessary for our departure, every moment fearing the return of Don Raphael, whose power I knew, and whose threats I had to dread.

The promises he had formerly extorted from me were all cancelled by the discovery that Cornelia was not his daughter; but the solemn threats he had uttered arose too strongly in my mind to be slighted. What is it that love will not overlook; or what daring shall a man shrink from in pursuit of that pleasure? It is a phrenzy of the soul, during whose existence, reason, interest, and every barrier, are only opposed in vain!

—If

If ever there was an instance of such extravagance it was now exhibited in myself.---Without friends, without fortune, where had I the means of providing common existence? But these reflections, at that moment, did not enter my mind. I remembered only that now to leave Cornelia was to leave her for ever.

It was not long before Cornelia, confiding in the innocent simplicity of her own heart, and my promises, gave herself up to my protection, and we hastened to leave behind us this gloomy building. This flight reminded me of the night when I fled with the Marquesa and her daughter, and the grief I was preparing for the latter inspired me with a sadness I could not controul. To say the truth, I was not perfectly satisfied with my flight, and almost repented my precipitation; but it was now too late for these reflections; though I could not but reflect on the means Don Raphael might possess of executing his vengeance.

“ Tell

“Tell me, Lorenzo,” said Cornelia, sighing as she leaned on my arm, “What are you thinking on? Forgive the sincerity of my words, but you seem at this moment very like Don Raphael, gloomy, silent, and sad. I fear that all men are alike, though some may have more power to gain confidence than others.

I smiled, but was unable to return an answer, and we quickly came to the place where my horse remained stationed. I placed Cornelia behind me, after tranquilizing her fears, for she had never seen such an animal before, and could not forbear expressions of wonder at his beauty. I feared that our voices might betray us, through the deep silence of the forest, and advising her to be silent, I struck into the high road, proceeding at a round pace.

We had not proceeded far before a voice commanded me to stop, and I was nearly obeying, when I was struck at the sight of Don Raphael just before me, with rage in his countenance.

“Villain!

“Villain! affassin! robber!” cried he stamping with passion. “Is it thus you betray me? Stop, or shudder at my revenge!”

The screams of Cornelia prevented my reply; and striking my spurs into my horse, he darted by like an arrow. Don Raphael, seeing that his words had no effect, instantly fired his pistols after us, but the shot rolled amongst the branches, with no other effect than that of frightening the horse, who dashed forward with the utmost speed; and all our caution was necessary, to prevent being struck down by the spreading arms of the trees, which extended, and dipped over the path. The sound of his steps thundered through the forest, and disdaining the reins, Don Raphael was very soon left far behind; but our speed was unfortunately interrupted by some intertwined roots, which crept over the path, and which catching his feet, we were all thrown to the ground together:

My

My left arm was considerably bruised, and Cornelia was extremely frightened, but our horse halted in so crippled a condition, that I feared he had dislocated his shoulder, and could not possibly carry either of us.

In this forlorn situation I knew not what would be most conducive to our safety; for though Don Raphael was far behind us, he would certainly overtake us before long. It became absolutely necessary to quit the direct path; and by striking further amongst the mountains, endeavour to reach Leon by a wider circle: now the evening was fast approaching, and it was both unpleasant and dangerous to pass the night exposed to the damp of the forest.

I was obliged to leave the horse to his fate, it being impossible to lead him through the intricate mazes of the wood; and striking, as far as possible, in a direct line from the path, we hoped to find safety in the desolation of this wilderness.

The

The ground over which we trod scarce served to support us, being covered with luxuriant grass, and formed of a thick strata of leaves, which the winds of autumn shook from the boughs, and where they fell, they remained to enrich the principle of re-production.

We continued to wind along the openings, frequently struck by recoiling boughs, or stopped by entangled briars, till Cornelia, wholly unused to so much exertion, declared she was so weary she could proceed no further.

It was vain to wish for relief, for none could be expected in this deplorable wild. I endeavoured to inspire her with courage, and slackening our pace, we proceeded till we came to a gentle descent on the left of our way, which seemed to conduct to a secluded dell, where at least we might expect security. This descent sloped gently for some yards, then turning abruptly, we opened upon a little spot the most romantic in nature.

We

We had to descend by the assistance of the trees and strong shrubs which grew in disorder down a precipitate bank, formed by nature, of about thirty yards, when we entered upon a small plat of short grass, kept ever fresh, and covered with flowers, by the stream which crept along one side, over a bed of flat and broken rocks, so clear and transparent, that it seemed to the eye a moving mirror. On the other side of the brook, and forming a part of the circle of this delightful place, arose a broken and stupendous precipice, in the interstices of which, at intervals, grew various ever-greens and mountain ash. Several myrtles in full bloom spread upon the little green where we stood, in the centre of which grew a large oak, whose branches would have sheltered a company. If the eye looked along the stream, it was interrupted by dark and tremendous rocks, and we stood in a magic circle, formed by nature, of beautiful verdure, and of gloomy grandeur.

“ This

“ This is eminently beautiful,” said Cornelia, “ and far superior to the little recess where you first saw me. I think I could be content to live in such a place.”

I smiled at her simplicity ; and being myself charmed with the situation, and more so with the company of this innocent girl, I banished from my mind every unpleasing reflection, discoursing with her more freely than till now I had ever had opportunity. The time flew swiftly away, and the evening sun sunk unregarded behind the western mountains.

The increasing gloom of evening changed this sequestered dell into a retreat of dismal appearance. Darkness settled upon the rocks, thick mists arose from the blackened water, and canopied over our heads ; a cold wind followed the channel of the stream, and sighed through the cavities of the rocks, with a sound like the fancied invocations of invisible and fabulous deities ; and superstition might with ease have here taken her dwelling.

Cornelia

Cornelia had been used from her earliest memory to gloomy and awful scenery: she had frequently trod the dark and dreary passages of the mouldering castle, when the wind roared, shaking it to the base with its fury: she was not therefore alarmed at the approach of darkness, which for so many hours was to overshadow us.

The screams of the birds of night echoed through the hollows of the rocks; and the rising wind sounded in the tops of the trees like the rushing of distant waters. Beneath the thick foliage of the feathered oak we listened to the signs of a gathering storm; for in this mountainous part of Spain, the vapours are collected by the hills; and the exhalations of the day, condensed by the coldness of night, frequently descend in torrents, accompanied by the thunder and the wind.

With these Cornelia was better acquainted than myself, and she assured me a storm was approaching.

The

The broad drops of rain soon began to patter upon the leaves, and the vibrations of the air conveyed to us the murmurs of distant thunder. I was fearful that my fair companion would be frightened at the tempest; but she replied, that nothing could be more familiar---that she had frequently, from the turrets of the castle, beheld the lightnings play upon the distant hills, whose summits were seared by the subtle flame---and that Don Raphael would at times accompany her to contemplate this awful but sublime phenomenon of nature, when the dark woods and the black mountains have been lighted up by repeated flashes, and all the surrounding landscape seemed in flames.

While I listened to her description, the tempest drew nearer, and the faint lightning penetrated our recesses, throwing an obscure and dismal gleam upon the threatening precipice, and the water which solemnly dashed at its foot. The peals and repeats of the thunder shook the earth,
and

and rolled over the hills with tremendous grandeur, inspiring irresistible awe; while the vivid and successive flashes of lightning seemed to threaten nature with universal combustion. The founding rain hissed and sang amongst the foliage, through which the collected drops began to penetrate.

We stood up, Cornelia leaning on me for support, both listening in silence to this elemental uproar. The embodied and cumbrous clouds, impregnated with sulphureous matter, and agitated by the howling wind, seemed gathering over our heads. An immense blaze of light for half a minute illumined every leaf around us, and penetrated the darkest chinks of the rocks. The thunder almost instantly followed in sounds as if the rocks had been shaken from their stations, and were tumbling upon us; while the wind howling with dreadful fury, stripped the boughs from the trees, sweeping them like stubble in a harvest field.

I clasped

I clasped Cornelia in my arms, expecting no less than that we should both perish together ; but a deluge of rain that rushed down seemed to calm the fervor of the tempest, the violence of the storm passing away to a distance.

I began to fear the swelling of the stream would overflow the place where we stood, and led Cornelia to the rising ground, where some large hawthorn bushes partially sheltered us from the torrent which continued to descend.

“What a night is this !” said I. “You would have been more agreeably situated in the castle---”

“Hush !” said she in a whisper: “What is that?”

I raised my eyes, and perceived the red glare of a torch reflected against the opposite rocks, and could plainly distinguish voices above us. It will be too much, thought I, if Don Raphael discover us in this retreat: his vengeance is more to be feared than all the fury of jarring elements.

I dared not venture from the spot where we stood, lest the distant flashes of the lightning might betray my figure. I could clearly distinguish through the gusts of wind two voices, which sometimes called to each other, and then seemed to stop in consultation. They paused on the brow of the hill just above us, and their torches reflected down to the water, which was now wholly above the ground where we had stood, whirling along with frightful violence.

"I tell you what," said one of the men; "my torch will go out, in spite of all my care. I don't much see the use of it, if it is not to tell we are here."

"Let it go out then," replied a rough voice. "This is the place; let us descend."

"That is what you might have spared to tell me," said the other in a deep tone; "and a better place there is not in all the forest. But as to descending, I say *no*."

"What are you afraid?" said his comrade in a sarcastic manner. "I thought we had known how to act in the dark."

“ Fool !” cried the other, with peevish impatience, “ of what use is descending ? By this time ’tis a foot deep in water. I am for going on immediately to the castle : we shall be well accommodated there---we shall reach it, I warrant, in an hour.”

“ Well, well,” said the first ; “ the old Don must give us a lodging this night, and settle a long account before morning.”

“ No more of that,” returned the other ; “ he may chance to hear us ; he is perhaps at this moment wandering about the forest, to enjoy the scenery, as he calls it. Let us away !”

Such was the dialogue of these men, as they stood on the top of the ascent ; and when they moved away, my blood ran cold in my veins at the suggestion, that their errand was no doubt to murder Don Raphael.

Imperious and mysterious as was the character of this man, I felt an inconceivable repugnance against allowing these villains to proceed in their scheme ; and

certainly if Cornelia had not been with me, I should have followed and attempted to prevent them: but to leave her behind, exposed to accident, was as utterly impossible as] to take her with me: and while I lamented my own want of power, I could not but rejoice at our escape from these robbers, who I had no doubt subsisted by outrage.

“How shocking is it,” said I to Cornelia, “that even this forest, which seemed intended for tranquillity and peace, should give shelter to men such as these. Open or indirect violence appears to be the characteristic of man: and this earth, at times so delightful, is overrun with crimes, with misery, and with destruction.”

“How differently,” said Cornelia, with a deep sigh, “did you paint the world to me before I left the castle; and now you use the very words Don Raphael has repeatedly impressed upon me. Why did I ever quit the days of my youth: alas! as

I in-

"I increase in years and in knowledge, and I to increase in wretchedness?"

"It is frequently but too true," answered I: "the lot of man is wonderfully cast. He, who of all beings has the greatest claim to happiness, if pre-eminence of intellect and faculties can bestow it, is yet the object of perpetual and scarce remitted calamity, and the dreary mansions of the grave stand at the end of his career."

"But surely he must have some other existence," said Cornelia gravely, and pressing my hand.

"He must---he must!" replied I; "or of all created beings his lot is the worst."

These reflections, the time, the situation and circumstances had inspired, filled us with the most serious thoughts; and I found, that though Don Raphael had held his pupil in the most profound ignorance of the world and its people, he had taken care to cultivate her mind with a knowledge of the great principles of natural causes and effects, and more than ever I

deeply regretted that this man was my enemy, and that it was utterly impossible I could warn him of his danger.

I had yet, however, a latent hope that his agitation at the loss of Cornelia, would keep him on the watch, if he had not pursued after us, and I knew full well his means of defence, to doubt the event if he received the slightest alarm.

In our unpleasant situation, wet with rain, and unable to sit down upon the ground, we remained several tedious hours, till the grey light of morning broke in serenity upon the world; and the waking birds sung the glories of the coming day. The air purified by the late ferment, diffused the clear principles of life. The waters had subsided as suddenly as they rose, and the grass glittered with liquid gems.

All these charms were ill bestowed upon us, whom fatigue rendered indifferent, and hunger weak. It was in vain to expect any resources in the forest, the year being
too

too young to offer her fruits; nor did I know of either town or village in this road to Leon. Cornelia, unused to hardship, began to droop, and I had need of all my strength to support her.

When we bade adieu to that delightful but dangerous retreat, and began again to pass along the entangled forest, the breath of morn was a cordial to our spirits, and the fine vapours exhaled from scented flowers and shrubs, delighted the senses, and encouraged us to proceed.

About two hours brought us to a narrow pass between the mountains, where there was little more opening than was occupied by the stream. With much difficulty we passed along the shelving rocks that dipped into or hung over the water, and very soon opened upon a wide country, free from forest trees, and scattered with flocks.

Hope again revived, and though neither habitation nor man was visible, we proceeded with satisfaction, having now nothing to dread from the pursuit of Don

Raphael. We had not advanced far, before the rustic notes of a shepherd's pipe, mingled in the pleasant airs that flew over the waste, and filled us with joy. We listened with rapture to those pleasing and innocent sounds, which poets fable of the primitive ages, when princes and heroes played upon the reed, and sylvan scenes were the perpetual subjects of song.

We moved with lighter step over the wide-extended pastures, and following the brisk sound of the pipe, were not long before we discovered a young shepherd beneath the few shrubs that grew near the water, surrounded by some sheep, which quietly fed around him, taking care not to wander far, lest they should lose the soft tones of his pipe. His dog, the faithful companion of his steps, and the partner of his toil, lay reposing at his side ; but his attentive ear catching the sounds of our steps at a distance, he started up and began to bark.

At

At first the youth seemed inclined to run, our appearance and dress being such as he had never seen before. I called to him to inquire the road to Leon, and if he could direct us to any village or cottage, where we might procure some refreshment.

He replied that Leon was a long way off, and a very different road, and that we should not find any dwelling for the distance of two long leagues; at the same time he offered us part of his breakfast, if we did not think it too humble.

We accepted his hospitality with real satisfaction; and sitting down without ceremony, he took from a little scrip that lay beside him, a bottle with milk, some cake, and cheese, to which hunger gave a relish, superior to the most luxurious viands.

We remained near an hour, conversing with our young friend on the nature of a shepherd's life, or listening while he played over to us the few simple airs he was mas-

ter of, but to which the novelty of the circumstances gave a peculiar charm.

We received his directions for finding the cottage he had mentioned, where we purposed to rest during the heats of noon; and while the morning air was yet fresh, we took leave of our shepherd, continuing on our way over a wide but uneven country of pasture, scattered at distant intervals with flocks.

So great a contrast from the other side of the mountain, where spread the gloomy forest of St. Helma, could not but excite surprize; and I wondered to whom those untouched groves belonged, whose owner permitted them to remain in all the wild and unprofitable luxuriance of nature.

About noon we reached the hut to which we had been directed, where we found some goatherds, who spread before us the stores of their cabin. They were not a little curious to learn the reason of our singular mode of travelling, and from whence we had come. I informed them
that

that we had lost our beasts in the forest behind the mountains, and were therefore obliged to proceed on foot to Leon.

“It was well,” said a grey-headed fire, “that you did not lose yourselves there. You must have been ignorant, Senor, of the strange reports that go about that valley, or you would never have entered it.”

“What are these?” said I.

“O they are too many to be repeated at once. There is an old castle there that they say is in possession of the *Old Serpent*. Holy Virgin! I would not enter that old tumbling ruin for all the flocks on these wastes.”

I smiled to myself at the wonderful and impenetrable charm Don Raphael had formed around him, by building upon incredible tales, and popular falsities; and finding I could gain no real information, I changed the subject, requesting to be instructed in our road.

“You go straight to Leon,” said he, with a look of reflection. “You will scarce

reach Leon this night, that is, before the gates are shut. You have got ten good leagues before you, which, may-hap, this lady will find too long a journey."

This information was by no means pleasing. I found that we had hitherto been pursuing a very opposite road. It was impossible to think that Cornelia could accomplish such a journey on foot, she being now so much overcome that our progress was extremely slow, and I requested them to direct me to some village where we might procure mules or other conveyance.

"It is a main intricate road for a stranger," replied one of them, "being that there is nothing but tracks for cattle over these wilds and high lands; but if you will wait in our cottage till towards sunset, I will myself attend you to a village, where you may have every thing you want, with a night's lodging into the bargain, and you may set off in the morning fresh and strong."

Though

Though I regretted this delay, I knew not how to avoid it; and it being impossible to reach Leon that night, if we had had all the day before us, I accepted the offers of the goatherd with acknowledgement.

When they had finished their meal, they went out to attend to their flocks, with a gaiety of heart arising from ease and health. Excepting their exposure to storms and the inclemency of the seasons, their life appeared enviable for its tranquillity and carelessness.

Some hours before sun-set our new guide delivered up his charge to his comrades, and accompanied by us, set out from his native village, from which he had never been as far as Leon in his life ; nor did he regret his station, since having seen only plains and mountains, with people of his own rank, ambition lay dormant in his breast, and he remained satisfied with the place his birth had allotted him.

How much more happy should I have been, thought I, as we moved slowly forward,

ward; had those, who took upon themselves the disposal of my fortune, placed me in an humble cottage.

The solitude and studies of a cloister would not then have refined my feelings, and given me a thirst for superior contemplation. The learning of a college would not have placed me above others, and sickened me with the common routine of life, by painting to me its folly and misery: nor should I have been compelled into the army, to act at once repugnant to all my feelings, and my nature. How ill had my education been adopted to my profession, and how much more than cruel in the guardians of my youth, to teach me ideas and principles which were to unfit me for their final destination, and then wholly desert me to all the horrors of poverty.

My reflections were bitter in extreme; nor could even the observations of Cornelia, as she walked by my side, and endeavoured to lead my thoughts to passing objects,

jects, take my attention till this remark, which she made, roused me with its truth.

“Methinks,” said she, “that at this moment we are like that unfortunate pair, whom judgment had banished from paradise. Behind us are the mountains that conceal the valley where I spent all the hours of innocence and youth. Curiosity led me to the secret of my birth, and sorrow has been my portion ever since. Before us is the world, of which I know nothing; and by my side is Lorenzo, once so cheerful, but now so overwhelmed with sadness, that he seems, in my eye, as our first parent must have looked when after falling, he experienced the vengeance of his master, and with sullen steps left the garden with this his erring companion.”

I felt the pointed keenness of this reproach, and blushed at my own thoughts.

“Forgive my negligence, Cornelia,” said I; “having you for my companion I ought not to repine at fortune; but man is so inconsistent a being, that he
laughs

laughs and cries at ideal evils, and is often more affected by these than by reality."

"For my part," said our guide, "I always laugh; it is only for children to cry; and as I never trouble my head with any thing that is past, or grief that may come; I am grown old, and shall, no doubt, live the rest of my days as contented and happy as you see me now."

"That is true wisdom without argument," replied I; "How far do we want to the village? the sun sinks fast, and the shadows stretch far behind us."

"Yonder," said he, pointing below us. "You may just see the house, covered with cork, peeping through the trees.---We shall be there before the sun has quite left us. There you will find my wife, and our two daughters, as pretty girls as any Spain can boast, and merry as larks.---I will engage they are now trimming the fire, and getting things ready for my return. You cannot think how much pleasure I have in returning home at night, especially when
the

the weather is bleak.---When I come plodding and dripping with wet, and think of my snug little corner in the chimney, beside a roaring fire, and my lasses smiling beside me; that, Senor, is what I call *superlative* happiness."

We reached the cottage before our guide could find in his heart to be silent, giving us the history of his daughters from their cradle. We found these such as he had led us to expect---modest, lively, and hospitable; and we received from them an agreeable welcome, their mother hastening to place before us the stores of their cottage.

If Cornelia had been surprised at the goatherd's hovel on the waste, how much more was she astonished at this little cluster of houses, and every thing that she saw? She had expected to find all human dwellings like the castle of St. Helma, and she was every moment remarking to me the pleasing difference between obliging ease,

ease, and the solemn gloom of the awful place she had hitherto been used to.

The toils of the day were now over, and the labours of the village ceasing, several young men and women came to visit our host, and his family. Every one sang some little ballad, and stories of love and murder beguiled the hours.

I may truly say that this rural entertainment banished from my mind all the evil of my fortune. Cornelia shared in my sentiments, so much that we regretted when the fleeting hours obliged us to depart, notwithstanding the necessity we had of repose.

In the morning, having provided mules, and a driver, we set out for Leon, arriving there late in the afternoon. I discharged our guide and his beasts at the first inn, and providing Cornelia with a thick veil, and a dress more suitable to the city than the singular habit she wore, and which had fixed upon us the eyes of every passenger, I ventured to lead her towards my lodgings,

ings, proposing to introduce her to Donna Christiana as my relation, though I was at some loss what degree of affinity to assign her, which might, in some degree, apologise for my cruelty in carrying her there; though I much feared that all my precaution would not prevent the quick eye of suspicion from discovering the truth.

If I could with safety have trusted Cornelia from under my immediate protection, I should never have thought of introducing her to the company of Christiana, who I feared would impute this action not merely to contempt of herself, but into an insult of which my heart was incapable.

Such were my reflections as we passed along the streets of Leon, where every object had something new, and something wonderful in the eyes of Cornelia, who would have lingered with pleasure to gaze around her, had she not been frightened by the numbers of people, whose unceremonious

remonious and various manners, were all strange to her.

I rapped aloud at the door of the widow Sporza, waiting for some time, but she did not appear, nor was it till I had knocked several times that she came pale and trembling to the door.

“Good heavens!” exclaimed she, shutting the door hastily behind us, and fastening it; “by what means have you escaped, and where did you meet with my lady Christiana?”

“Christiana!” repeated I, seized with a sudden apprehension of I knew not what. “This is not Christiana---what has happened?”

“O blessed saints,” cried she several times. “Then you are ignorant. You know not what has happened. I was in hopes you had found your poor sister, and recovered her. Such doings! O, Holy Virgin, that I should see such things in my old age!”

“Be

“Be a little calm,” said I, “if Donna Christiana is gone, lead this lady to her chamber, and then come and relate to me all you know.”

“You cannot stay here, indeed you cannot,” said she, “it grieves me to forbid my house to such a friend. But---”

“But what,” said I, astonished; “is the woman mad?”

“I am not mad, heavens be praised that I am not. But such another night as the last would make me so.”

I now began to be seriously alarmed; for hitherto I had thought that Christiana was most probably gone to her father, upon some message she had received, without communicating her intentions to dame Sporza; but it was now too easy to see that something of more terrible consequence had occurred, and passing by her into an adjoining room, I begged Cornelia to be seated; and dame Sporza, who followed us, to sit down, and calmly repeat what had happened. This her terrors rendered impossible,

possible, but the story I drew from her, was more than sufficient to dash to the ground all my fancied happiness.

I learnt, that on the preceding night, about an hour after dark, two savage-looking men, muffled up in a suspicious manner, knocked at the door, demanding if I was within ; dame Sporza let them enter without suspicion, and informed them that I was not at home. One of them inquired if there was a young lady in the house, who lived with me ? Dame Sporza innocently replied, if they meant my sister, she was at home, but she believed, retired to rest. “ It makes no difference to us, so as we can see this same sister,” replied he, with a grim smile.---“ Lead on mother.” Dame Sporza begged them to consider ; but roughly pushing her forward, they commanded her with imprecations, immediately to lead them to the lady’s chamber, pointing at the same time to the arms they were well furnished with, beneath their cloaks. Dame Sporza, by these actions was too much frightened,

frightened to call for assistance, and indeed, they informed her, that a whisper of that nature, would be the signal of her death---a threat their countenances, and savage appearance amply confirmed. At the same time they informed her, that if she would produce the Cavalier Lorenzo, she should have the pleasure of seeing his throat cut on the spot.

When they came to the door of Donna Christiana, they did not wait for her to unlock it, at one blow splitting it from the top to the bottom, bursting at once upon the terrified lady, who, most fortunately was not yet retired to rest, but remained to finish the duties of the day, by performing the duties of religion.

So sudden and so terrible an entrance, roused her from the posture of supplication, and nearly sinking at the sight of those fierce barbarians; she yet had presence of mind to suppose they were come with intention to rob her. She besought them to take the little box, which contained

all

all her wealth, and suffer her to remain without harm.

“ You mistake us,” said the ruffian, who had been most forward. “ But as you offer it as a gift, we cannot do less than take it.--- You must go with us.”---“ Go with you!” cried she, shuddering at the idea. “ Oh ! where is Lorenzo, that he has deserted me?”-----“ That is what we want^{to} know,” said he, “ we have got another commission for him. Your father commands you to accompany us.”-----“ My father,” repeated she, gazing wildly upon them. “ He could not wish me to go with *you*---you deceive me---I will not go.”-----“ That we will see,” cried he, advancing to seize her, his countenance inflamed with malice. “ Our orders do not admit delay, or we would wait the return of your gallant. He must be very fickle, so soon to tire of so pretty a girl.”-----“ O, Holy Virgin,” ejaculated the terrified lady. “ What mean these speeches? Has my father forgot the family that I am descended from,

from, and can *he* listen to calumny ! Is this his cruel mode of revenge ! But as I am innocent, I care not now what becomes of me. Men, I will follow you, be it even unto death.”--“ Perhaps it may, and perhaps it may not,” said the hardened wretch, unmoved by her agony and her tears. “ Here comrade, you carry the box.” Then taking her by the arm, and partly supporting her, they hurried away.

“ Great God ! Omnipotent Judge of mankind,” cried I, rising with frenzy in my mind at this narrative. “ Oh, where was I, that I could not protect such innocence ? What must have been the torture of her delicate mind ; but I see clearly into the miserable plot : it is Don Raphael who has begun to exert his threatened vengeance ; it is not the Marquis de Miranda, and the hapless and innocent Christiana has fallen a victim to the malice intended for us. These miscreants are the tools of this man ; they are doubtless, those robbers whom we heard in the forest of

of

of St. Helma, and Don Raphael has found means to turn them to his purpose ; their ignorance of your person, Cornelia, prevented their discovering a mistake, the words of that unfortunate lady only served to confirm."

Cornelia sat pale, without uttering a word, and when I had finished these exclamations, dame Sporza informed me that she had yet only related half the terrors she had to suffer. "What I have further to say," added she, "more nearly concerns yourself. These banditti had not been gone an hour, which I spent in lamenting the distress of so mild and so beautiful a lady, when a loud rapping made me believe they were returned, and would perhaps, take me with them next. Instead of going to the door, I went to the window, and there I beheld a number of men with torches, and a file of musqueteers ; an officer commanded me in the king's name to descend and open the door. I was obliged to obey them, and in they
instantly

instantly rushed, to the number of more than a dozen, demanding to be shewn Lorenzo de Ferara. I informed them that you had been gone from my house for two days, I knew not where. Not contented with my assertion, they examined every crack and corner of the house; finding you were not to be found, they commanded me, on pain of imprisonment, to inform the magistrate Mendoza, or the officer of the garrison, the moment you should return. One of them who had formerly been acquainted with my husband, whispered me, that you were discovered to be an accomplice with the enemies of the state; that one Vasco, or Vasto, or Basto, had been arrested, and that if you were taken, you would be punished without mercy."

My limbs trembled beneath me as dame Sporza spoke. It seemed as if an unfathomable gulph was opening at once beneath me, to involve me for ever. I was so confounded at this detail, that sinking into a chair, I covered my face with my hands,

and for a long time remained in a state, little short of distraction. I was in too much agitation to be capable of any clear reflection, and the bitterest grief took possession of my soul. The tender voice of Cornelia roused me from thoughts that stung me to madness.

“Let us fly, Lorenzo,” said she, “to the village where we were so happy last night ; let us take upon us a new character. You shall lay aside the gay dress of a soldier, for the cloaths of a peasant, and I will remain in our little cottage, to wait your return from the hills, in some plain habit, such as the villagers use. They appear to me the only people in the world who look happy. Every body seems serious and frowning, that I have seen in this great city, but those villagers had little to do but to sing and to laugh. I know that my scheme is not to be executed without money : Don Raphael has taught me the value of that. I have brought with me some little trifles, which he gave me from time to time ; telling me, that

that if any accident was to happen him, I might live upon them at Leon."

"Be it so," cried I, rising and taking her in my arms. "A time may come, when Don Raphael shall lose his power, and the Marquis de Mirandula find means to clear my character from this infamous aspersions, which I dare not meet; for I have no friend that will interfere, and see that justice is not overcome by deceit; and I am too certain, that had I not some powerful and secret enemy, this accusation could not have arisen against me. I know that my flight will be construed into guilt; but am I, as a testimony of my innocence, to remain, and suffer all the degradations and insult of office and of power?"

"Dame Sporza," said I, "you must give us a little assistance, for this very evening, at nightfall, we must quit Leon. I have many jewels belonging to the Marquis, but their sale might create suspicion. You may dispose of some of the least valuable

this lady will give you, and hasten to us without delay."

When she was gone, I gave to Cornelia the scholar's habit Christiana had formerly worn, and drew over my military dress, the habit of a monk, which had once so effectually served me. Thus metamorphosed, we scarcely knew each other, and I could have believed, at a little distance, that I had again seen Christiana; so nearly in certain positions, did the person of Cornelia resemble her, though the colour and vivacity of the latter, much better supported her disguise.

"Charming creature!" cried I, "if you were a man in reality, it would be dangerous for you to walk the streets; all the ladies of Leon would be in love with you."

"Do you think," said she, half smiling, and half serious, "that your sister Christiana, whom you so much admire, would fall in love with me?"

"She is not my sister," replied I, "but a most unfortunate lady, whose history I
would

would before have given you, but that I hoped to have introduced you together. When I have leisure, I will make you acquainted with what I know of her fate, and you will then join with me in lamenting the accident that has happened. I hope, however, that Don Raphael, in common justice, will send her back, when he perceives the mistake of his creatures ; for though his revenge is boundless, he yet possesses many virtues."

" I must confess," replied Cornelia; " that I felt an odd kind of sentiment towards a lady you seemed so fond of, and yet had never mentioned to me ; but I am now satisfied."

I smiled at this instance of native jealousy ; which, though she felt, she knew not how to name ; but the entrance of dame Sporza ended our discourse.

She appeared surprized at our change of dress, but putting into my hands the money she had received : " You have not a moment to lose," said she, in a trembling

voice ; “even now your enemies may be behind me. While I was in the silver-smith’s shop, there came in a gaunt, dark, strange looking man ; he stared at me in such a manner, that I felt cold from head to foot. He took up one of the rings, and his countenance changed. ‘ These are your’s ?’ said he to me, in a deep voice. I replied that they were ; turning pale at his question. He stalked out of the shop, without saying another word, and I hurried straight home, afraid to look behind me.”

It was in vain to reproach this poor woman with want of thought. I had little doubt, but this man was Don Raphael himself ; and telling dame Sporza that I should take the road to Portugal, for I could not trust her discretion, I hurried Cornelia away through several dirty lanes, in the greatest anxiety, lest we should be stopped at the gate, it being now quite dark.

CHAP. VII.

AT the moment we reached the gates, the centinels were closing them. "Ah, father," said one, "a moment longer, and you would have been too late."---"It is never too late, my sons," replied I, "to do a work of mercy.---Even the gates of heaven open to charity."

My heart seemed in my mouth as they allowed us to pass, and our feet moved more swiftly when we heard the gates bolted behind us. I considered myself now secure from pursuit, for one night at least, and before the morning I hoped to be at a considerable distance.

An open inn-yard, where there were a number of carriers, invited us to enter, and with some difficulty I hired two mules, for which I paid down more than their value. While we were mounting, a benedictine monk, on a sorry beast, rode into the yard, and seeing me habited like himself, immediately accosted me with great loquacity, inquiring whence I came, and whither I was going.

"I am going," said I, "to Toledo, with this youth, my companion."

"Are you so," cried he, "then am I in fortune's way.---Here, host, a glass of aqua vitæ, for I have a pain in my stomach, and must immediately join this good company, who are going to Toledo."

"I beg," said I, very much chagrined, at this impertinence, "I beg you will not hurry yourself for us, we travel very slow."

"I like to take my time myself," replied he. "One might as well be a muleteer as run over the road. I am sure we shall be
good

good company, and our number will keep us from fear in the dark."

"We have no fear," replied I, whipping my mule, "there will be a moon in an hour."

He swallowed down his glass in haste, and spurring after us, joined us with a loud laugh. "You are very uncharitable, brother," cried he. "I am only one, and yet you want to leave me behind you. Pray what are you going to do at Toledo? To what convent do you belong? Shall you call at the convent of Benedictines, and see your brethren of that city? I will bid you welcome, notwithstanding you made me almost choke myself with the brandy. I am a member of that foundation."

"Indeed," said I, admiring his loquacity, and recollecting with various emotions the place where the first years of my youth had been passed. "How came you to leave the walls of your retreat, and wander about like a mendicant?"

“You do me wrong, brother,” said he ; “my business at Leon was of some little importance, but I have not been able to succeed, for which I am sorry, as my disposition leads me to do good.”

“May I inquire the name of so charitable a person ?” said I. He replied that it was ‘ father Timotheus.’

“ Father Timotheus !” exclaimed I, “ what, the most facetious brother of the order, whose cell is more adorned with legendary rhymes than verses of piety---who was always believed to have more religion than formality ?”

“ Heaven be thanked,” cried he. “ I knew that if I fell out with one adventure I should fall in with another: since I missed finding the person I have been to seek, let me know whom, without seeking, I have found.”

“ Do you remember, father,” said I, “ that many years ago you had an unknown youth in your convent, whom a stranger paid for, but never owned, and who was
after-

afterwards sent to the college at Toledo, by the same invisible friend?"

"A miracle!" cried he, with a shout of joy. "Are you little Lory, that used to throw about the incense with such grace? I remember your voice. How came you to leave the armies of the world to join the banners of religion? if you had been so inclined, why did not you come to our convent, which has a natural claim to you, and where you would have found a welcome reception? Do you know, my journey has been wholly on your account? and it was very unwillingly you suffered me to find you at last."

"You surprize me greatly. How could I be the object of your journey?"

"I suppose," said he, "your companion is discreet."

"He is the same as myself.---You may say any thing before him."

"I have then to tell you that a lady of rank has inquired for you---she has given a considerable sum to our convent for our
care

care of your early years. She made interest with the superior, that one of us should go to Leon, where you had been last heard off; though she feared that you were dead. She concealed her name and abode from us; and we could only guess by her appearance that she was of rank. I have been three days at Leon, seeking for you. Some told me they knew you were dead, for they had seen those that saw your funeral; and others, that you were serving in the ranks of rebellion: some that you were taken up, and lay in prison: while I find the truth is, that you are alive and well, and a brother of my own order."

"Holy father," replied I, "even you are not acquainted with the truth. I am not ignorant of your integrity. I know the rectitude of your morals, but at the same time I know your indulgence of the failings of human nature. Others in your situation would condemn me for impiety. You know it is not the appearance of sanctity

sanctity, the lifting up of the hands, and the eyes, but the heart, which distinguishes the truth of professions."

"After all this," replied he, "you are going to tell me you are an impostor, and want to engage my vanity in your favour. Proceed, however, to confession, and I will consider the penance you will incur."

I made no scruple to relate to this good natured monk our present situation, and the dangerous occurrences which had led to it, and still threatened us with destruction.

When he had heard me to an end, he remained a few minutes silent---then raising his voice---"You, Lorenzo, and you, Cornelia," said he; "the one for assuming the secular habit, and the other for changing the emblems of the sex, must perform a penance our church will inflict, and which I sincerely hope may last for life. In a word: I charge you as you would obey the commands of your confessor, to marry
as

as soon as possible, even at the very first town you arrive at in the morning."

"What hinders, reverend father," said I, "that you perform this service upon the spot. The oath of constancy, and the prayers of religion will be as binding beneath the starry canopy of the heavens, as the roof of fretted stone; that Being who pervades all existence must be present to all."

"That is most true," answered he, "but it is necessary for decorum and example, that these ceremonies be performed in public places. Man is so fallen a creature, that much ceremony, and many witnesses are required to bind him to his duty."

"My dear and early friend," said I, "It seems in my eyes an especial favour of heaven that has conducted you to us at this time, involving so much of our fate. Whom durst we have trusted with our situation, and how should I have ever been espoused to this object of my sincere affection?"

fection? You must not then, holy father, refuse us your benediction."

"But how am I certain this lady will consent to have you in this abrupt manner," replied Father Timotheus, "methinks that you are very ungallant."

"If I may answer for myself," said Cornelia, in a modest tone of voice, "I have already given my promise to Lorenzo; and a promise delayed, he has told me, loses half the merit of fulfilment---besides, Lorenzo has a ring upon his finger, given him by Don Raphael, which will answer the purpose."

"Excellent casuists, both of you!" cried the monk, laughing till he brought on a fit of coughing, which nearly displaced him from his mule. "Well," added he, "if I must of necessity consent, let us turn a little aside into this grove, amongst whose branches the moon scatters her peaceful light."

It was there we pronounced the irrevocable vow. The good father uttered a
short

short but fervent prayer for our happiness; and being now intitled to claim Cornelia as my wife, I felt less fear at the threats of Don Raphael, proposing to continue our journey direct for Toledo, under the hope which I yet dared scarcely indulge, that I might find a parent who would be sufficiently powerful to raise me superior to my enemies.

The moon shone serenely in the azure heavens, attended by innumerable stars, and peace was spread over the face of the earth. Nothing could be more pleasing than this tranquillity, and having rested ourselves, we arose to continue our journey. The clattering of horses' feet alarmed us, for though we had no idea that ourselves were concerned, every trifle had power to affect us. We remained in silent expectation till they should pass us, but stopping at the end of the lane, one of the horsemen cried out, "Halt! let us see if this will produce any thing." I now began to be
alarmed,

alarmed, I knew not why, disentangling my sword from my monkish robes.

“ These are, most likely, robbers,” whispered father Timotheus ; “ we will give them a trifle, they will not expect much from monks.”

A man rode furiously up the lane, which was so narrow there was no room to let him pass, and I feared he would have rode over Cornelia, who screamed as the horse came close up to her. I seized hold of the bridle, and exerting all my strength, checked his career.

“ Come on, come on,” cried he, “ my revenge will be complete.”

I shuddered as he pronounced these words, too well remembering the voice of Don Raphael, though his person was disguised, and his face concealed in a black mask. Two men rode up at his call, dressed like himself, and masked alike ; but before they could arrive, he had fired both his pistols, and attacked me sword in hand, with the fury of a madman. His skill at that wea-
pon

pon was superior to mine, and his advantage on horseback so much, that while I in vain attempted to touch him, I received several wounds. His attendants came up in less than a minute, and seeing how their master was engaged, immediately fired; one of the bullets penetrated my arm, and my sword fell to the ground; another mortally wounded Cornelia, and faintly crying out "she was killed," she fell upon father Timotheus, whom these wretches were going to dispatch, had not the commands of Don Raphael stayed their hands.

I flew to Cornelia, wounded as I was, and caught her hand; it was already cold, and her eyes were closed for ever! A sudden transport of rage fired my heart. I darted upon Don Raphael, intending to tear him to the ground, and trample him beneath my feet, but I received a blow, I know not from whom, and I fell upon the earth, wholly deprived of sense.

When I opened my eyes again upon the world, I found myself in a situation, of
which

which I could give no account. It was dark, and I was moving along with rapidity, which motion, no doubt, had contributed to recal me to life. I felt considerable pain in my arm and head, and endeavouring to stretch out my hands, I found they were tightly bound. Through the obscure darkness that prevailed, I thought I could trace two figures seated before me, but they neither moved nor spoke.

It was so extremely close and hot, that I found it almost insupportable ; and judging by the motion, that I was confined in a carriage, I demanded of those before me, by what authority, and by whom I was thus made a prisoner.

They returned no reply to any question I proposed, taking so little notice of me, that they did not attempt to prevent me freeing my hands, probably because they knew all my efforts were in vain.

I conjectured that I was by some strange accident, become a prisoner of state, and
giving

giving myself no uneasiness about the consequences, (for I did not regard my innocence) I felt a sort of satisfaction in reflecting, that I should very soon be liberated by death from all persecution.

As the gradual dawn of day broke through the obscurity, I had leisure to examine the figure of the mutes before me, though from their external figure, I could make no certain inference. They wore masks, were both of them tall, with long mourning cloaks wrapped round them; they were well armed, and one of them sat with his hand resting upon his sword.

I begged they would permit the windows to be opened, but they made no answer, and as they neither stirred nor spoke, I knew not whether they were living or dead. For some hours we continued to move forwards, without once stopping to change the mules, and I endeavoured in vain to catch a glimpse of the country, through a little window behind them

them, which scarce served to dissipate total darkness.

At length they stopped suddenly, and I heard the voice of one or two people, and the unharnessing of the mules. I begged that they would now permit me to have something to allay the thirst and heat which tormented me, but they preserved the same profound silence. I was astonished that themselves should not accept refreshment, as their masks must prevent a free respiration.

When the fresh mules were harnessed, I heard a strange voice from without, demand if we were going to a funeral, which was answered in the affirmative, and the driver immediately cracking his whip, we began to go forward.

This is mysterious indeed, thought I; are these men before me then not the ministers of justice, but hireling murderers of Don Raphael?---and to whose funeral are they dragging me! Surely they would not take this pains to make my own exit more
 insufferable ;

insufferable ; and how could they have arranged so much machinery in so short a time ! Can Don Raphael possess powers like these ! Where could he find men sufficiently depraved---men whom he could trust to step forward at his call ? Are the fiends of the air, and the demons of the earth obedient to his will ? and is there more than fable in these strange reports that concern the castle of St. Helma ? So well contrived, and so admirably adapted to meet the wishes of a mind unchecked by morality or religion ; ties, which assuredly Don Raphael has overleaped, since he has so many years bade defiance to all the customs of men. Is it to satisfy his cruel disposition in witnessing my agonies at the grave of Cornelia, that I am thus conveyed a prisoner ? or does he mean to see me die, that he may be satisfied I shall never in this world appear against him ?

These reflections were interrupted by the sudden stopping of the carriage, and the door being opened by a person on the
outside,

outside, the man who had sat with his hands on his sword, stepped out, the other remaining without the smallest motion, and I shuddered at the idea that he was dead.

I looked out at the door, but the country appeared wholly different to any I had before seen near Leon. It was a wide campaign, and so barren, that no flocks were to be seen browsing upon its scorched herbage. My view from the door was very confined, and it was in vain I called to them, to permit me to quit the carriage; for being on the opposite side, they either could not, or would not hear.

Having made an end of this repast, the same person, attended by another also masked, came up to the carriage: he made a sign that my hands should be liberated, and standing over me with his sword drawn, he waited while I swallowed a few mouthfuls of biscuit and a glass of wine. He saw that I was so much enfeebled by the fever, which crept through my veins, that I could scarce move my hand to my head,

head, and perhaps being ashamed of thus appearing to fear a man who had neither weapons nor power to use any; he resumed his station, permitting my hands to remain unbound.

More than ever I was astonished at the total inaction of the other person. Surely, thought I, were he dead he could not sit so erect, nor would this man ride in so familiar a manner with a corpse, unless his soul were as callous to feeling as that of Don Raphael, and why may it not be Don Raphael himself? This is much the same figure, and by the rings upon his hand he cannot be of common rank.

The carriage again proceeded, and again we were almost suffocated with the intense heat, which the blazing sun, in all its lustre, reflected and refracted from every side, while the dust rolled in clouds through every chink. My guard began now to be uneasy in his situation, partly loosening the fastening of his mask for air.

I was

I was so languid, that death seemed at no great distance ; and closing my eyes, I endeavoured to suffer with resignation.

I did not venture to address one word to this mute conductor, for I felt the utmost repugnance in my soul to speak to a man whom I took for Don Raphael, whose actions had inspired me with an abhorrence that words were wholly incapable of expressing.

Intolerable as our situation was, we continued without remission till the abating heat proclaimed the approach of evening, and the jolting of the carriage informed me that the roads were broken and rugged.

Some break in the road, on a sudden, nearly overfet our crazy machine, and the person who had hitherto remained without motion was thrown upon me. His mask fell off, and my conjectures were confirmed in the horrid truth, that it was indeed the corps of a man which was thus conveyed. His features were almost livid, and a deep

wound in the face gave him so frightful an aspect that I shrunk from him in the utmost horror.

Without appearing to notice my agitation, and with the utmost coolness my conductor put back the funeral cloak, which was wrapped round the dead body, and placing him in an upright position, fastened a bandage, which the shaking of the carriage had loosened, and which confined him to an erect posture. He suffered the mask to remain off, and when my eyes turned upon its grim and ghastly visage, my soul sickened within me.

After proceeding for more than two hours over this very difficult part of the road, we again came to a more even surface, and the wheels making very little noise, seemed smoothly rolling over grass, while every moment the boughs of trees dashed or trailed against the sides of the carriage, and more than once we were stopped as if to allow time for clearing the way.

Now,

Now, thought I, our journey is nearly ended: this is, no doubt, the forest of St. Helma; but what indiscretion, to bring so many witnesses to an act which will one day or other transpire, unless, indeed, these men do mischief, more from the love of it than the desire of reward.

The carriage stopped, the mules were unharnessed, but the door was not opened, and I remained in the most singular uncertainty for near an hour; almost believing that we were thus to pass the night, it being by this time quite dark.

The man in the mask began to shew signs of uneasiness, striking his sword against the bottom of the carriage. At length a flash of light gleamed through the little window, the door was opened by the same man who had appeared in the morning, and now stood with a lighted torch in his hand.

“Is every thing prepared?” said my guard, in a voice I knew belonged to Don Raphael; and seeing me start, he withdrew

his mask, casting upon me a look that he intended should petrify me with horror.

He stepped out, and made a sign that I should do the same; but I had been so long confined in one position that my limbs refused to sustain me, and his attendant supported me by the arm. I looked round me, but a deep gloom enveloped the silent forest, through which the rays of the torch had not power to penetrate far. I perceived that the machine which had brought us was a hearse, and neither mules nor any person but him who held the torch, stood near.

An excessive carelessness about my future fate was the consequence of the debility of my body; and following Don Raphael, a few paces brought us to the well-known gate, which led us to the court-yard of the castle of St. Helma.

A little to one side the earth appeared newly turned up, and a torch was burning upon the ground. Don Raphael paused, and making a sign to his mute companion,
 he

he left me to support myself as well as I could. For some minutes we remained in this strange situation, for both the master and his servant seemed resolved not to interrupt the solemnity of the scene by speech. The latter quickly returned, bending under the body of the man which had been our companion through the day. He advanced to the grave, and without ceremony threw in the corpse, which he immediately began to cover, with the assistance of Don Raphael.

Good heavens ! thought I, as I witnessed this tragical scene, what are the actions of this man to which night is the only witness. How many outrages, how many dreadful crimes, cry aloud for vengeance ? Who can this be that they take so much pains to conceal ? Father Timotheus is not so tall ; nor is it that wretch, Filelfo :---No, it is but too probable that he is the servant of this mysterious man, who triumphs alike over the machinations of the wicked, and the plans of the injured.

Having ended their employment, Don Raphael advanced to me with one of the torches :---“ I bid you welcome, Cavalier,” said he, “ to my castle---your visit is rather late.”

“ Don Raphael,” replied I, indignantly, “ there was a time when I thought you superior to the rest of men---I now think you beneath them.”

He replied only by a ghastly smile, making a motion for me to proceed. We entered the castle by the postern gate, which he barred behind us. The doleful echoes of our steps ran along the galleries and lost themselves in distance.

“ Methinks,” said I, “ this place is sad. What have ye done with Cornelia ?”

The question touched the latent feelings of his heart ; it was unexpected, and the cheerless gloom which hung upon every object, gave it an increased expression. His countenance turned pale, his lips trembled, and in an hesitating voice he replied, “ Thou shalt see her !”

I felt

I felt myself shocked in my turn; my knees trembled, and I had scarce power to follow.

He unlocked the door of a small chamber, which opened into the galleries, and raising the torch, its gleaming rays shot into the room. He pointed, and with evident difficulty pronounced the word "*There.*"

My eye glanced for a moment into the chamber:---a second look would have been death. The dead body of Cornelia was stretched out upon a black cloth on the floor. My head was seized with giddiness---clouds swam before my sight, and I fell upon the boards. Don Raphael closed the door with a violence that shook the castle, and in a voice at once harsh and terrific, commanded me to rise.

More dead than alive I arose, and with a staggering step followed this unshaken man, whose long funeral robes gave his figure an air of something more than human. We passed a range of galleries in which I had never before been, and

through whose half-broken windows the cool air of night mournfully sighed. We were stopped at the end by a door, studded with knobs of iron, and strongly barred.

Don Raphael drew back the rusty bolts, and raising his torch, pointed out to me this inscription in Italian :---

*Voi ch'entrate, lasciate omai ogni Speranza.**

Hope had already taken leave of my heart, and not deigning to make any observation, I stood ready to enter, though I had not forgot the chamber, which had been prepared for my reception, the first night I entered this building. Don Raphael pointed me to advance. I smiled with indifference, turning my eyes upon his palid countenance, where sternness was mingled with misery, and it might have been disputed, which of us had most cause to mourn.

I entered this place without hesitation, though I expected nothing but death, and
that

*Ye who enter here, may leave behind every hope.

Dante.

that perhaps of a cruel nature. I found myself in total darkness. I heard Don Raphael secure the door, and the hollow echo of his retreating steps ran along the galleries.

Overcome with suffering and fatigue, I sunk down upon the floor, remaining in the same situation till the morning, when I found myself almost incapable of moving from the pain of my wound. A faint glimmer of light shone through a small window far above reach, and only serving to render visible the objects around me.

Had Don Raphael contrived a chamber that should have suited the despondence of my soul, he could not have furnished it more exactly: yet indifferent as life was become to me, I could not look round me unmoved.

This chamber was extremely lofty, lighted only by a small grating at the top, facing the door. The plain boards on three sides were painted black, on the fourth side, hung down a curtain of the
N 5
same

same colour, concealing a recess; the boards of the floor were stained with blood in several places; a table and two chairs composed the furniture, and these were stained black, which produced an effect the most gloomy. Some strong iron rings rivetted into the planking, declared the favour Don Raphael did me in suffering my limbs to be free. A litter of straw pointed out to me the corner where I might seek sleep, when it should visit this melancholy abode; and a pitcher of water, and a loaf of bread upon the table, shewed I was not intended to be famished.

“This is then all that this man allows me,” said I, as I sat down near the table. “for what purpose does he keep me here, for what does he design me?” I was obliged to break the bread, for I had been robbed of every weapon; and I wondered they had not stripped me of the jewels which were concealed in my garments. Without doubt, this simple diet served to restore my health, by cooling the ferment of my blood,

blood, and thereby tranquillizing my spirits. My wound had no other dressing than a bandage dipped in some elixir, which Don Raphael brought me the following morning, with my portion of bread and water. He made no inquiries after my health, nor condescended to reply to any of my questions, preserving a haughty and impenetrable silence.

He attended me regularly every morning himself, wrapped in sullen gloom. If I ventured to reproach him for his cruel injustice, or to intreat him at least to suffer me to enjoy a freer air, he received all I said with an impenetrability bordering upon contempt. I could neither irritate him to anger, nor bend him to kindness; nature seemed to have intended him for the office he imposed upon himself.

He never approached me, without the caution of being armed; and more than once I was tempted to snatch at the handle of a dagger he wore in his vest, but his eye was always steadily fixed upon me, and he observed

observed a stated distance, never venturing more than a yard from the door, so that I could not make the slightest motion without alarming him ; and I knew that to attempt disarming him by open force, was to court my own destruction.

Many days and many weeks passed away, before my strength returned ; and together with it, that desire of life, nature has so strongly planted in the human breast. Inclosed in a gloomy cell, where sound could scarcely find entrance, and where my mind had leisure to brood over all the ideas my experience in life had impressed upon my memory ; the time did not appear unemployed : and when I remembered that could I have power to quit this prison, and return again to the world, I should be only plunged into a troubled whirlpool, with no hope of ever finding rest. “Of what value to me,” would I say, “is liberty, the choicest blessing of man ! Were I to quit this tranquil abode, it would probably be only for the public dungeons of a common

common prison. Were Cornelia living, I might have looked to the hours, when my innocence would have liberated me, and her company charm from memory the past. Even for the sake of Christiana, I might wish to be free: in her piety, I should learn to look to a brighter existence, and her divine countenance would assure me of a more perfect being.

It was after a long train of reflections, such as these, that I sat listening to the deep sighings of the wind which penetrated through the little grated window above me, uniting sounds, that sometimes rose to a musical cadence, that I fancied the black hanging moved with more than ordinary impulse.

I shuddered while I sat gazing at the slight undulatory motion; for solitude and reflection had now strongly tinged me with superstition. I called to mind the phantom that had passed me on the mountains, and I remembered the warning voice which had called me in the forest, and
even

even then seemed to found in my ear. The wind blew loudly, and shook the tottering turrets ; a strong gust raised a part of the black hanging so much, that I perceived behind it a small and dark recess, which I had never before had so much curiosity as to discover.

I immediately arose, and drawing aside the curtain, found a small cell, which received no other light, than the scanty reflection from the other apartment ; a crucifix upon an altar of black wood, informed me, that this was a place for devotion ; at the foot of the cross, was placed a human skull ; a memento, which cannot be seen with indifference, and which silently teaches us our own insignificance. Turning round, I perceived a coffin upon the floor, covered with a pall ; this object aroused my attention. “ Doubtless,” said I, “ this contains the mouldering remains of some former inhabitant of this dreary place ; who, before me, passed his life in perpetual silence, and glimmering uncertainty.”

tainly. Alas, what crimes do not large and inscrutable buildings like this, give birth to ! Here revenge may brood over its victim unsuspected, and passion be tempted to outrage."

I took up the pall to examine some letters that glittered on the black cloth, and taking it towards the light, I was shocked at seeing my own name, *Lorenzo de Ferrara*. My blood, for a moment, seemed to cease its circulation, and groaning deeply at this refinement of cruelty, I threw myself into a chair in the bitterest anguish.

"Why," cried I, recollecting myself, "Why do I permit such a trifle to affect me ? What is there in this, more than in the garment that I wear ? It is fancy which gives importance to objects such as these. Let me see, however, what are the contents of this coffin. Perhaps he designs to fright me with a skeleton !"

I again entered the recess, and putting aside the lid of the coffin, which was loose, I found that it was empty.

"It

“ It may be,” said I, “ that I am destined to fill it ; and what then ? Shall I die the sooner, because I know that a shell is prepared for the fragile part of myself ? No ! Don Raphael, your power cannot reach all things. I despise your malice---I will shew you that my soul rises superior to your oppression. This gloomy chamber, decorated as for a funeral---these objects of mortality only remind me of human weakness, and when I reflect in how very few years, even you and myself must quit this existence ; trifles insignificant and worthless in my esteem, are all and every thing this world can give.”

I determined to shew Don Raphael that I despised his meanness, and spreading the pall over my table in place of a napkin, I determined it should remain, as it seemed to finish the furniture of the room. On the following day, when Don Raphael entered, with my usual allowance of bread and water, he stepped half a pace backward, at sight of this arrangement, then
turning

turning his eye upon me, the blood tinged his cheeks, and he retreated in haste, unable to stand the contemptuous smile with which I regarded him.

From this time, I determined to preserve an equal silence with himself, neither requesting his clemency, or irritating his anger. I had no hopes in attempting to escape, having minutely examined the walls and the door, which were absolutely impregnable to any effort I could possibly make.

As my health and strength returned, the slow progress of time became irksome. I had no active amusement to divert my attention, and the minutes might be counted as they passed. Resentment preserved me from sinking under these evils, and I have frequently doubted, which was the most wretched, Don Raphael or myself.

For the whole circle of a year, I endured this imprisonment, and in compliance with the inscription on the outside of the door ;

I did

I did not permit myself to hope, that any thing but the death of one of us, would terminate my misfortunes. If I felt any fear, it was at times that Don Raphael would himself be snatched away before me, and I should then perish with hunger ; an accident to which I was every day liable, from the violence of his passions, though his years were little more than beyond the meridian, and his health was established by the regularity of his life.

About this time my portion of bread and water, was changed into wine and dressed dishes. I was utterly at a loss to account for this indulgence ; but from whatever motive it might arise, I resolutely persisted in silence, for my spirit was wound up to the full height of resentment, and words could not express the feelings of my soul.

Some weeks after this change, Don Raphael paid me an unexpected visit. He fastened the door behind him, and taking one of the chairs, sat down. I was astonished

nished at this action, ceasing to walk too and fro, which I frequently did, without deigning him the smallest notice."

I took a chair, and sat down facing him. His colour changed repeatedly ; he gazed upon me with a fixed regard, which I returned with a look of haughtiness. In about a quarter of an hour, he arose, and retired without having uttered one word, nor could I conjecture his reason for so singular a visit.

For upwards of a month, he treated me with his usual silence, when one day he entered a second time, about an hour after he had provided my daily allowance, and taking a chair, he sat down as on his former visit.

Is the same farce to be played again, thought I; does he wish to speak, and dare not trust his voice; or am I to believe that I am under the guard and keep of a lunatic.

He gazed at me as before, nor did I shrink from his glances, taking my seat
facing

facing him, but as far distant as the narrow bounds of my prison would allow.

“Lorenzo!” said he, and remained silent.

“Don Raphael!” replied I, in the same tone, without saying more; and a frown lowered his eye-brows.

“Unbending spirit,” said he, “can nothing shake you? Do you triumph over me though imprisoned, from whence you can never escape?”

“My spirit,” replied I, with rising indignation, “is superior, Don Raphael, to thy threats, and thy power. I was an orphan, and thy castle has given me an home.---I was without revenue, and my table receives a constant supply.---I was tossed by the storms of life, and thou hast provided me stillness and repose.---I married a lovely wife without means to support her, and thou---thou hast taken care of her. See then my obligations, but ask me not to repay them.”

“The

“The balance of our accounts is not equal,” replied Don Raphael, pale and trembling with passion. “I was secluded from all the vicissitudes of life, in the peaceful bosom of this forest, where I expected my years to roll by undisturbed as the silver stream, which wanders over an even surface of sand; but, like Satan, thou didst enter my retreat, and blasted the schemes of many years.

“In this castle, which is mine by the right of ancestry, I had gathered round me all that could charm the tedium of solitude, give pleasing themes to melancholy, or life to the moment of mirth; but thou hast dashed from my hands the cup of felicity, and left me nothing but the dregs. I had selected from the world a child, whose pure soul, as it sprang from the fountain of life, was yet uncontaminated with the vices of a degenerate world, and with the fondest affection of a lover I watched over her welcome. But the years of maturity no sooner advanced; no
 sooner

sooner had I said to myself, now shall this spotless angel become indeed my partner in this terrestrial paradise, than thou, born to blast me, tore her from me, destroyed her, and for ever planted a dagger in my heart. Was there no other in the world that could have satisfied thee but her? or was it the wantonness of youth that led thee on to ruin me?"

Big tears chased each other down his cheeks at these words. I was astonished, dismayed, and wept at his sufferings.

"Good God!" cried I, "what a wretch have I been! What dreadful fatality hung over my head! Why did you not destroy me at once when my rashness first led me to explore these walls? But give me leave to say that your scheme must have been formed in a delirium. Who would entertain such a project, and wish the world to think him in his senses?"

"I value not the world, and all its opinions, at the price of a breath of air. Let all mankind believe that I am mad: *I have*

have been so, and my actions for many years have partaken in the effects. I know it. My soul is too mighty for its mortal existence. This feeble fragile frame cannot second its impulses. The darkness of night gathers round me, and hangs upon me in perpetual gloom. I am become fit to be thy companion, for no hope ever dawns upon my soul."

Don Raphael continued to rave in this manner for some time. By turns he groaned, and by turns he wept: and repeatedly beating his forehead with his fist, acted the part of a lunatic, and I believed myself in no small danger of sharing the storm.

When he had exhausted this effervescence of his spirits, he sat down, remaining for a long time silent. "Lorenzo," said he at last, with a sigh, "if you have not had sufficient knowledge of me before, you must suppose me the most inconsistent man beneath the heavens; but if you knew how much I have suffered by
the

the human race, and more particularly that most false and perfidious sex, you would allow that I have some cause for my actions. Listen to me then, for this is not the least of my absurdities, that I am going to make you my confident.---You who have injured me beyond forgiveness---you whom I have sworn to hold in perpetual imprisonment.”

It is beyond the smallest degree of doubt, thought I, that this man is deranged in his intellects. “I know” said I, “what you would tell me. I am not ignorant of your attachment to lady Sempronia, and that the Marquis de Mirandula---”

“Hell and all its demons seize the Marquis de Mirandula,” cried he, his countenance assuming the darkest dye. “Never let me hear his insufferable name; my nerves are torn by the sound:---you tell me you know what I have suffered---you know nothing---you never did---you never can know what it is to be distracted with the most ardent love---treated with
repulsive

repulsive disdain, and racked with all the pangs of jealousy ;---to see the mistress that you worshipped frown upon you, and take to her arms your rival ;---to go raving mad and pass two years in all the wretchedness of insanity, with reasonable intervals, at times, that were more insufferable than death. Nature has not formed your frame to know this :---You would expire beneath half that I have suffered !”

“ Don Raphael,” replied I, “ permit me to observe, that the mind which suffers in silence, which, deeply wounded, broods over an inward and inexpressible grief, may feel as acutely as that fire formed spirit which blazes into actions of extravagance at every disappointment. I have seen lady Sempronia, and the picture of her youth. I have perused your letters, and can allow the full extent of your loss: but did the world contain none other her equal---could no other have power to charm your heart? Is not the contrariety of inclination become a proverb? so much

so, that one would think there was a fatality attending us; for not one instance in a thousand can be brought of reciprocal esteem."

"How coolly," replied Don Raphael, "do we reason, when we ourselves are not interested. Wherefore did not you follow these maxims when the mild and beautiful Christiana was in your company, and under your protection. Reason unprejudiced would have given her the preference over her sister Cornelia, who wanted that fascinating softness, and amiable meekness---"

"What," cried I, "is it possible, Don Raphael, that Cornelia and Christiana were sisters? Was it you who stole away the daughter of the Marquesa, which has cost her so many years of sorrow? and was Cornelia that unfortunate child? But alas! of what import now is this discovery?"

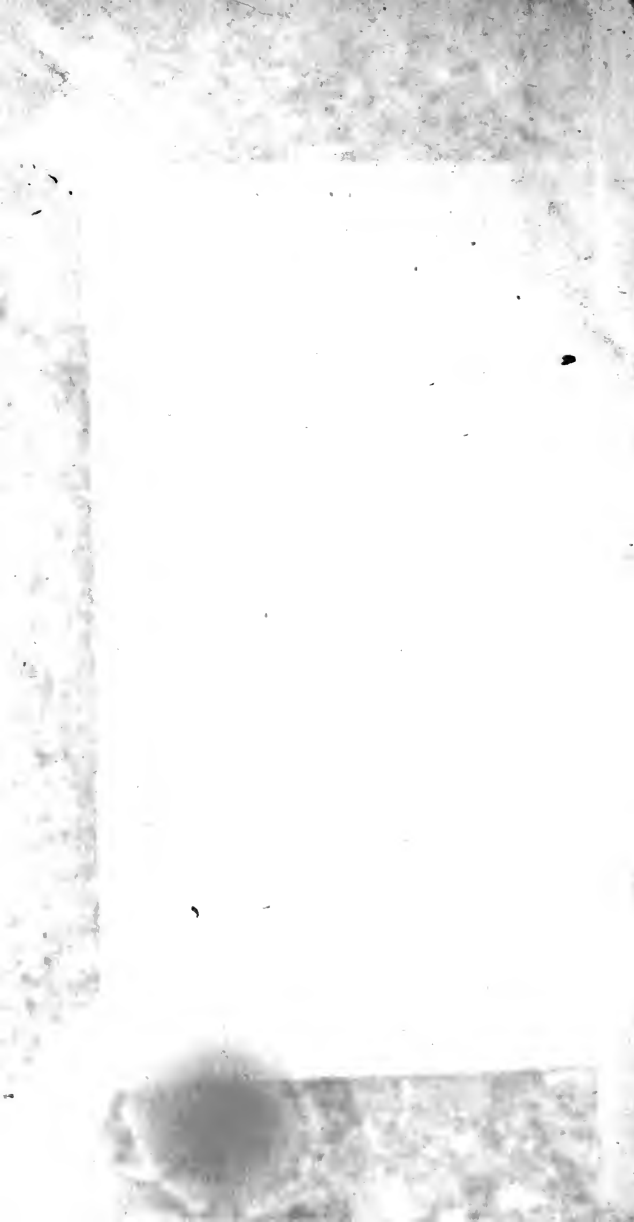
"Say no more---say no more," cried Don Raphael, "probe not the wounds which rankle at a touch. 'Tis fitting that you, who have been to me the instrument
of

of heaven's vengeance on my crimes, should know their extent. Listen then, but do not interrupt me---I cannot bear it. I do not exact from you now any oath of secrecy, for you will never have an opportunity of publishing what I tell you, unless it be to the winds which whistle through your grating, or the walls which cannot answer. Attend then to the fearful and eventful

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